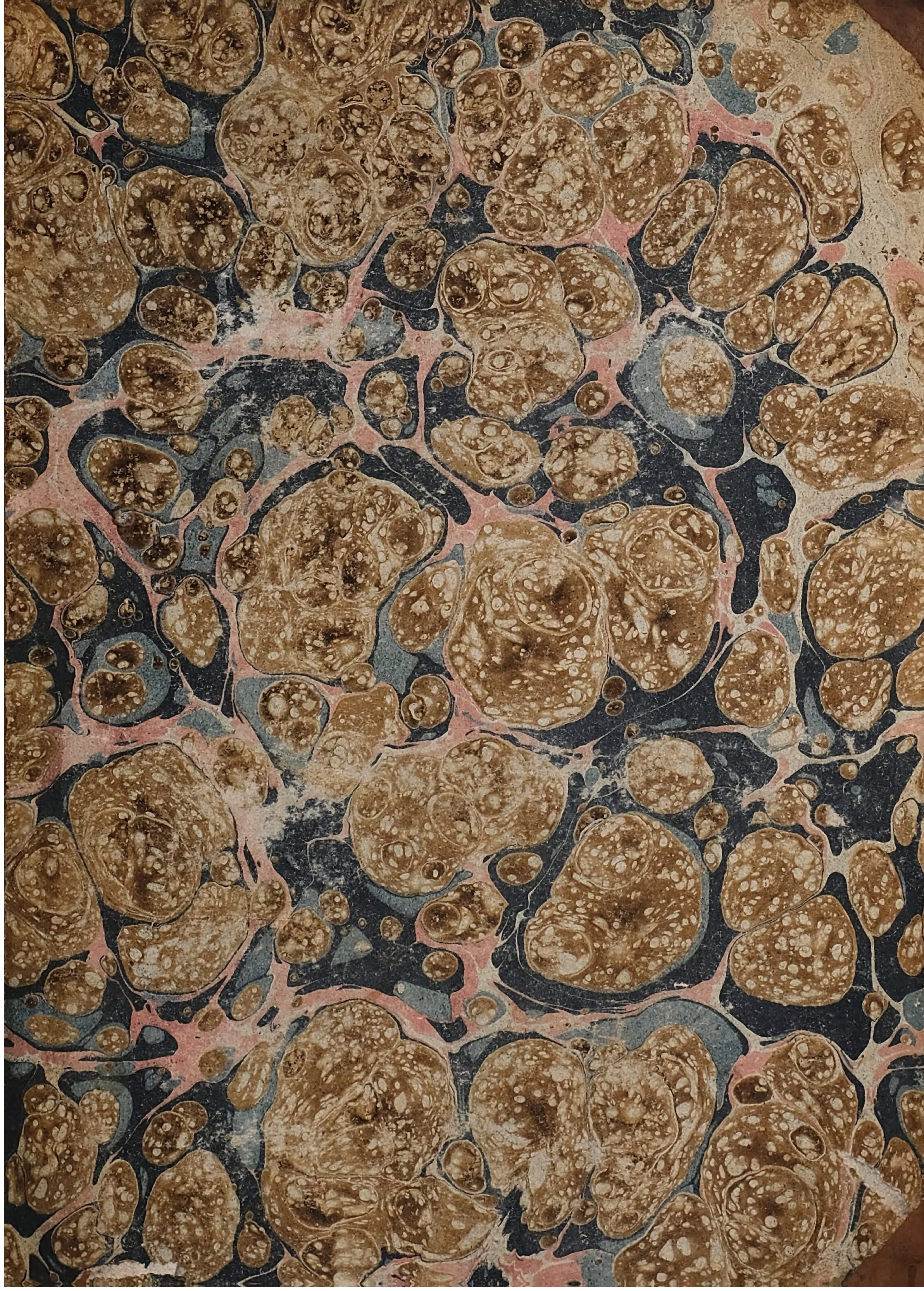
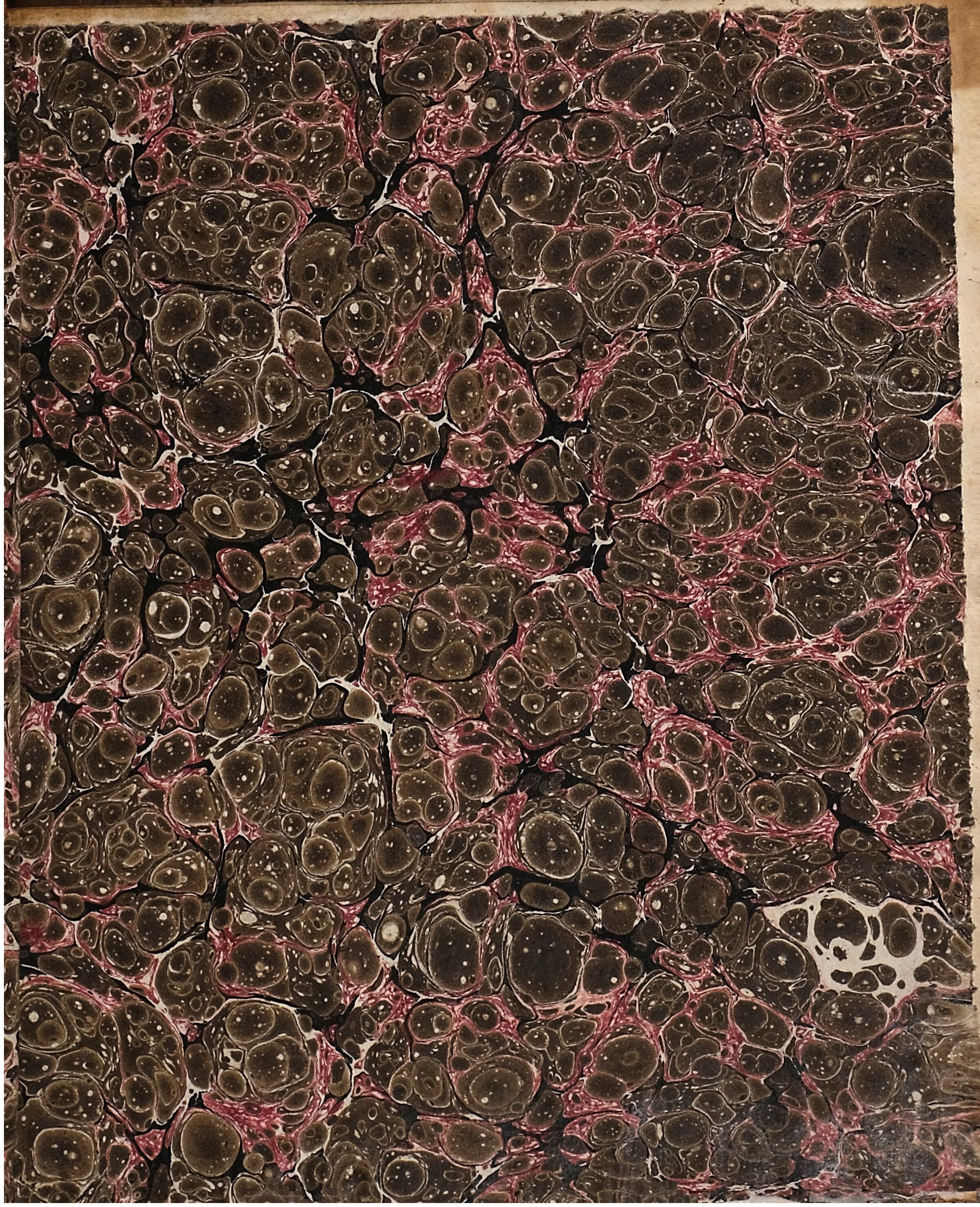






CAPT^N. GORDON,
Royal Navy.



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Hester Lynch Piozzi

Publ'd Decr 22, 1800 by I. Stockdale, Piccadilly.

RETROSPECTION:

A REVIEW

OF THE MOST STRIKING AND IMPORTANT
EVENTS CHARACTERIZING THE PERIOD.

WHICH
THE LAST EIGHTY YEARS HAVE WITNESSED.

BY HENRY LYNCH PIERCE.

WITH A PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

PRINTED BY J. B. BARNES, PICCADILLY.

1801.



Handwritten text, possibly a signature or name, in cursive script.

RETROSPECTION:
OR
A REVIEW
OF THE
MOST STRIKING AND IMPORTANT
EVENTS, CHARACTERS, SITUATIONS,
AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES,
WHICH
THE LAST EIGHTEEN HUNDRED YEARS HAVE PRESENTED
TO THE
VIEW OF MANKIND.

A la vérité ce n'est ici qu'un fragment, mais dans les travaux les plus achevés des hommes il n'y a que des fragments. L'histoire d'un roi n'est qu'un fragment de celle de sa dynastie, celle de sa dynastie de celle de son royaume, celle de son royaume de celle du genre humain ; qui n'est elle-même qu'un fragment de celle des êtres qui habitent le globe, dont l'histoire universelle ne serait après tout qu'un bien petit chapitre de l'histoire des astres innombrables qui roulent sur nos têtes à des distances qu'on ne peut assigner.

BY HESTER LYNCH PIOZZI.

—•••—
WITH A PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

—•••—

London:

PRINTED FOR JOHN STOCKDALE, PICCADILLY.

1801.



T. Gillet, Printer, Salisbury-Square.

P R E F A C E.

IF the Rambler is right when he says, “That no man
“ever obtains more from his most zealous endea-
“vours, than a painful conviction of his own defects,”
how strongly must that conviction press upon her mind,
who having collected all these facts together, presents
them as an object of *Retrospection* to the Publick. Of
those who turn them over, how different, how numerous
will be the censures! while each expects his favourite
hero, his best-remembered incident to be dilated and
brought forward;—instead of which others perhaps ap-
pear, and take the lead.

Different observers attach to every object, different
degrees of importance. Taking a country-walk one day
in a remote province, the steward advised speedy remo-
val of an ugly stag-horned tree. “Oh!” cried out a gen-
tleman in company who was taking views—“pray spare
“the

“ the favourite feature in my landscape.” “ You have
“ been, sir, a friend to the distressed,” said another of
our party, who professed natural philosophy—“ in fav-
“ ing from the axe those old dry boughs, for there are
“ birds which will not perch among thick foliage, mak-
“ ing rather a stag-horned tree like this, their seat of
“ delight all summer.”

This conversation has come often to my mind, but the
die is now cast, and complaints are vain. If however,
I should have made improper choice of facts, and if I
shall be found at length most to resemble Maister Fabyan
of old, who writing the Life of Henry the Fifth, lays
heaviest stress on a new weather-cock set up on St. Paul's
steeple during that eventful reign; my book must share
the fate of his, and be like that forgotten: reminding
before its death perhaps, a friend or two, of a poor man
living in later times, that Doctor Johnson used to tell us
of: who being advised to take subscriptions for a new
Geographical Dictionary, hastened to Bolt-court and
begged advice. There, having listened carefully for half
an hour—“ Ah, but, dear sir!” exclaimed the admiring
parasite, “ if I am to make all this eloquent ado about
“ Athens and Rome, where shall we find place do you
“ think for Richmond or Aix la Chapelle?” The per-
plexity

plexity was laughable enough—yet such are the perplexities of a compiler; and for a mere compilation stretched to two quarto volumes, the apology must be a serious one. It will be found however; but among things and situations so far from laughable and ludicrous, that they appear even awfully impressive.

To an age of profound peace and literary quiet I should have considered such an abridgment as insulting: to our disturbed and busy days abridgments only can be useful. No one has leisure to read better books. Young people are called out to act before they *know*, before they could have *learned* how those have acted who have lived before them. History is voluminous, and fashionable extracts are so perpetually separated from each other by verses or by essays, that they leave little trace of information on the mind: a natural consequence, and manifest disadvantage attendant upon *all* selections, where no one thing having any reference to another thing, each loses much of its effect by standing completely insulated from all the rest. Our Work, though but a frontispiece and ruin, contains between the two some shaded drawings, such as we find in rudiments of painting, and will, like them, be good for young beginners. Perhaps too, those who long ago have read, and long ago desisted from reading histories well-known, may like to please their fancies with
the

the *Retrospect* of what they feel connected in their minds with youthful study, and that sweet remembrance of early-dawning knowledge on the soul.

Their criticism I not only deprecate, but hope, by dint of petty amusement, in some measure to disarm: a pleasant story will divert, a tender tale affect them. No insolently obtrusive opinions through these pages, no air of arrogance will offend, or provoke such readers to *say*, however they may *think*, that the necessity of dilating, as it advances, like an inverted cone or sugar-loaf, robs my whole building of that solid basis which many fabrics boast, on which, after all, little sometimes is reared. A moment's thought indeed will shew such criticks, that any other way would have been worse: and half a moment will suffice to prove, that whilst the deep current of grave history rolls her full tide majestick, to that ocean where Time and all its wrecks at length are lost; our flashy *Retrospect*, a mere *jet d'eau*, may serve to soothe the heats of an autumnal day with its light-dripping fall, and form a rainbow round. Did no such book catch the occurrences, and hold them up, however maimed and broken, before the eyes of our contemporaries, we really should very soon forget all that our ancestors had done or suffered. The fever of these last ten or twelve years has formed a heat sufficient to calcine the images upon our
minds

minds to dust and ashes, which once seemed strong as if engraved on marble; and if some facts or characters have been called back, 'twas for the use of consultation they were fetched, then thrown again into the general heap, like papers we have done with, doomed to burn. In such a furnace, such an all-devouring crucible, events can scarce retain their proper value, and the mushroom of a night has equal chance to come forth unhurt, as has the oak of a century. Besides that our motto speaks fairly for the chapter it precedes, and says,

“ This work, I grant you, is at best a fragment; but what else shall we find in the most finished labours of man? The biography of one particular sovereign is a mere fragment, broken off from his own dynasty. The revolutions of a peculiar state form but a larger fragment; one piece, one page, torn from the great book, the general account of all mankind; which is itself at last no other than one species, one genus rather, among those uncounted millions that animate and people the earth, air, and water, of our terraqueous globe. That globe a fragment too, a trifling spot, of which the most exact and faithful narration would be found but a short chapter in the grand history, the universal volume of our Creator's works, containing the changes and chances of systems without number, rolling in illimitable space, at distances not to be judged of by humanity.”

But 'tis by darkening the glasse that we look at brightest objects; and spots in the sun could never be discerned unless we first *abridged* him of his splendour. Old Bradshaw, who wrote upon the origin of Chester, must in some sort serve as my model, who live near him, when he says in his prologue to a work rather historical than legendary, and more valuable (as Warton tells us) for virtuous sentiments than splendid diction; how

To descrybe hyc historyes I dare not be to bolde,
 Sithe suche is a mater for clerkes conveynient;
 As of the sevene ages and our parentes olde,
 Or of the foure empyres whilom most excelente,
 Knowinge my lernying thereto insufficyent.
 And for wicket balades ye shal have none from me,
 Excyting lyght hertes to plesure and vanitye.

For though I borrow not the Doctor's chair, whence at my ease to dictate creeds and ethicks, 'tis my intent, that from this book be drawn nothing that can prove detrimental to readers whose attention I am desirous to lure away from fiction to known truths, no less extraordinary, and at this moment far more interesting. To this end I have endeavoured not to press on them with my own reflections, rather suggesting thoughts in their minds, than forcing forward those entertained by the author: yet if
 the

the chain of events here untwisted should lend them reason to be less surpris'd at what is passing now, there's no harm done; *the warnings have been given.*

Here then begin we a summary account of what has happened in these eighteen centuries. I thought to have given some importance to the work, by prefixing on its first page the name of one of my earliest and most respected friends—than whom no wit, no scholar, nor no man of general knowledge, ever had more reason to delight in *Retrospection*: but Pennant is gone, and I will search no further for a patron. The same kind and encouraging Publick which has ever looked upon my labours with a tendernefs, and a good-natured desire of being pleased, more flattering far than hard-earned approbation, shall take as it is; and if they feel themselves pleased with the colours presented in the varying changeful mafs, will try to hinder some critick's heavy hand from breaking it; remembering that an opal loses all power of playing before the eye, soon as a crack is made in its thin surface.

But I will run down my own book no more. The duty of an author is discharged, when what the title promises has been performed. Yet let it not be said of *Re-*

trospèction, as once by a French wit, when Ferrand's *Erotica*, a dull dissertation upon the passion of love, came out,

Ut titulum vidi sum libri captus amore,

Ut librum legi, liber amore fui.

The title inspir'd me a strong inclination,

But reading the book, I was cur'd of my passion.

CONTENTS.

VOL. I.

CHAP. I.

Page

Containing the First Century; from Tiberius to Trajan. - 17

CHAP. II.

Containing the Second Century; from Trajan to Caracalla. - 37

CHAP. III.

*From Caracalla to the Death of Alexander Severus. First Portion of
the Third Century.* - - - - 59

CHAP. IV.

*From the Death of Alexander Severus to A. D. 300, the Retreat of
Dioclesian.* - - - - 71

CHAP. V.

*From the Death of Dioclesian to the Death of Constantine the Great.
Part of the Fourth Century.* - - - 88

CHAP. VI.		Page
<i>From Constantine to Theodosius, A. D. 400.</i>	- -	101
CHAP. VII.		
<i>From Theodosius the Elder to the Death of Attila, about fifty Years</i>		114
CHAP. VIII.		
<i>From the Death of Attila to A. D. 500.</i>	- -	134
CHAP. IX.		
<i>To the Expulsion of the Gothick Kings. First Portion of the Sixth Century.</i>	- - - -	148
CHAP. X.		
<i>From the Expulsion of the Gothick Kings by Belisarius, to A. D. 600.</i>		163
CHAP. XI.		
<i>From Good St. Gregory to the Death of Charles Martel, A. D. 700</i>		180
CHAP. XII.		
<i>From the Birth of Charles Martel, A. D. 700, to Charlemagne, A. D. 800.</i>	- - - -	198

CONTENTS.

xy

CHAP. XIII.

	Page
<i>From the Crowning of Charlemagne 800, to the Death of Alfred A. D. 900.</i>	216

CHAP. XIV.

<i>From the Death of Alfred, A. D. 900, to the Foundation of the Turkish Empire under Tangrolipix, A. D. 1000.</i>	232
--	-----

CHAP. XV.

<i>From the first Founding of the Turkish Empire under Tangrolipix, 1000, to the Time of the First Crusade, A. D. 1100.</i>	245
---	-----

CHAP. XVI.

<i>From the Year 1097, First Crusade, to the Middle of the Twelfth Century, A. D. 1150.</i>	271
---	-----

CHAP. XVII.

<i>To the Year of our Lord 1200.</i>	289
--------------------------------------	-----

CHAP. XVIII.

<i>From the Year 1200 to 1230.</i>	319
------------------------------------	-----

CHAP. XIX.

<i>Second Portion of the Thirteenth Century.</i>	338
--	-----

CHAP. XX.

<i>To the Year of our Lord 1300.</i>	-	-	-	Page.
				359

CHAP. XXI.

<i>From A. D. 1300, to the Year 1350, or nearly so.</i>	-			384
---	---	--	--	-----

CHAP. XXII.

<i>Ending with A. D. 1400.</i>	-	-	-	406
--------------------------------	---	---	---	-----

CHAP. XXIII.

<i>From A. D. 1400, to the Year 1425.</i>	-	-	-	426
---	---	---	---	-----

CHAP. XXIV.

<i>To the Sacking of Constantinople, A. D. 1455, and its immediate Consequences.</i>	-	-	-	442
--	---	---	---	-----

RETROSPECTION.

CHAP. I.

CONTAINING THE FIRST CENTURY;

FROM TIBERIUS TO TRAJAN.

BEING arrived at a fixed period, whence a new century rises to pursue its course, my contemporaries will not, perhaps, feel disposed to look with particular unkindness upon a writer who recommends, and endeavours to facilitate, *Retrospection*. When Regnard* and his companions had made many voyages, had seen three continents, and wintered in three different zones, they came at last to a point in Lapland, beyond the Arctic Circle. There with no small labour erecting a rustic column, they engraved on it their names, and the names of some places they had visited, ending the inscription with this impressive line—

Hic tandem fletimus, ubi nobis toto defuit orbis.

So it appears to us: the vulgar æra (and I will not teize my readers with any stale arguments against its authenticity) calls this the 1801st year since our redemption was accomplished. That portion of our time which is to come, rolls in a rapid descent before Imagination's

* There is a life of Regnard, with the story of Zulima in it, somewhere—and these lines; but I quote from memory alone, and Dr. Johnson's repetition of them. "Gallia nos genuit, vidit et indica tellus," is another, or like it; but the rest have slipped my recollection, and I know not where to find them.

eye, like earth viewed from its polar region by the travellers, and whilst Hope and Fear, bent forward with anticipating haste, are seen explaining to their eager votaries the shadows as they follow one another fast into the impervious mists of futurity; *Heic tandem sistimus*—and cast a *retrospective* glance behind. That glance will, at our Saviour's resurrection, find the surface of our habitable globe delineated by Strabo with deficiencies enough, but yet with care well worthy admiration from its present race of inhabitants—who will observe the great geographer's own country, Greece, with all her virtues, arts, and arms, and excellence of every kind, lost, not quenched, but like a fixed star by moonlight, scarce discernible through the superior blaze of Roman glory. Egypt and Babylon meanwhile extinguished, and Tyre even literally tumbled in the dust, exhibit proofs that those scriptures were indeed of divine inspiration, which promised Messiah to a sinful world—a world become *so* sinful, that less than the blood of Christ could not have cleansed it.

The characters of the six first Cæsars, given by Tacitus, too clearly shew, that good parts act not as natural protectors to virtue, unless religion regulates their powers; whilst in Julius the most eminent orators (says he) found an illustrious rival, and the dignity of Augustus's mind was revered in his diction. Precise Tiberius too, though terse in his expression, never was undesignedly obscure; nor did the fiery temper of turbulent and restless Caligula discover itself, in compositions previously written down and delivered before the Senate, where even Claudius's discourses made no mean figure; nor could his *style* be charged, even by those who laughed at his *behaviour*, with wanting elegance, interest or learning. That Nero's first speech was dictated by his tutors, the praises bestowed on *them* in it, sufficiently evince; but Nero was then a boy: the tenor of his future life betrayed a passion for the fine arts, which cruelty could not stifle, nor vice dissolve. But contradictions in these early days so mingle, or at least so cross each other, as greatly to disturb our general *Retrospect*, where the first fact
that

that offers may be called the conduct of the unbelieving Jews, who, without scruple, could condemn the Lord of Life and Glory, out of an unmeaning zeal for Cæsar ; to whose imperial standard they roughly refused admittance in their temple, and being pressed by Pilate for compliance, offered him—'twas all they had—their throats to cut. Tiberius, indulgent of their antipathy, commanded his Governor to see the colours carried safely to Cæsarea, and moved the Senate to deify our Saviour, while he refused divine honours to his own person, polluted by a long course of far beyond brutal depravity. In this *one* instance the Patricians manifested their ill-deserved independence ; in this *one* instance their dissembling master shewed himself sincere. He never would be worshipped. It is from one of this Emperor's speeches that the allusion, now so trite, was originally taken ; how the body politic resembles the body natural ; and the state was by him first called the *Constitution*. To his good sense we owe the admirable adage, since by imperial use well known—That honesty's the best policy—nor can more perfect testimonial to its truth be found, than that such was the fixed opinion of a prince, consummate master of dissimulation. Machiavelli borrowed one of his *earlier* maxims ; *Chi non sà fingere, non sà regnare* ; and keeps, I think, possession of the sentence.

It is, perhaps, not less important what Pliny tells us, that the disease, now called a bilious cholic, in his reign was new ; and he the first who suffered by its rigour :* some old physicians speak of the chordapfus. Tiberius had bad health when he retired from business, and probably his mode of life increased it—if half what is related of him *can* be true. Voltaire, indeed, does doubt the possibility of many accusations, but Voltaire never was at Naples or Capræa. The general *Retrospect* of evil however ; the strong mixture of madness with mis-

* Pliny says it stole in upon us, *irrepsit* is the word he uses ; and I have heard that a famous passage in Celsus tends to corroborate the opinion.

chief; and of gross folly with those false refinements upon sensual pleasures practised in Rome; head-quarters of human residence, excite at present no sensations but disgust, mingled with some little esteem of modern manners, which thus could prompt a wit of our own days to deny what ancient learning so steadily confirms. But whilst he sought in groves and grottoes, a shelter for his own depravity, new cities rose around the extended empire, and Ratisbon was named Tiberii after him. Aventine avers, indeed, that it was originally the work of Ingram, a Scythian chief, who, when Rhameses ruled in Upper Egypt, and Joshua led the Israelites to war, laid the first stone, and called it his Harminia, from Hermione, the wife of Cadmus, names familiarized to us by Ovid, but who are considered by Fourmont, and other antiquarians, as leaders of a troop of Hivites—serpent-worshippers, driven from the Promised Land by Moses' successor. Mr. Bryant says that Cadmus means oriental, the man who comes from the east. The city called after his fair companion was afterwards better known by the name of *Rhætabona*, from its inhabitants the Rhætians, and this appellation has been scarcely changed. But we must hold our eye firm to the first century, which has produced such deathless writers, heirs of immortal praise—

Whose honours with increase of ages grow,
As streams roll down enlarging as they flow.

Among these may be counted Pomponius Mela, though to that great geographer the limits of the Caspian Sea were all unknown, and much of what we now call India was to him terra incognita.

The polished Romans seemed to care but little what those vast regions of the world contained, except wild beasts to combat in their amphitheatres; yet had the supreme state commendable attention to make a topographical survey of the places they subdued. Cæsar had given an elegant account of his own conquests long before, and Velleius Paterculus, with nice penetration, found the true cause of Quintilius

tilius Varus's, so ill success in the martial character of those Germans, who, like their successors in later ages, dreamed not of judiciary determinations, but ended private as public quarrels by the sword. Feigning, however, to admire the newer mode of settling between plaintiff and defendant, they contrived to occupy the Roman General's mind with causes of dispute; then, suddenly setting on his legions in a furious onset, cut them all to pieces.

Historic powers indeed were frequent in the age presented to our *Retrospect*, that age which had seen Livy and produced Tacitus, and may be justly considered as fruitful beyond all others in genius, eloquence, and majesty. Although the account given of their own original, by the first named of these great men, is nothing less than accurate, we own, while Strabo himself scrupled not to tell mankind how Pater Æneas stirred not beyond the walls of Troy, as Bochart best confirms. That Livy gloried in his partialities; that he adopted one still nearer to self-love, by clinging to his own provincial dialect, despising, as do modern Venetians, the charge of patavinity, may stand as his excuse: but who shall make apology for Tacitus, when he relates peculiarities of the Jews which, we all know, could never have had existence. Yet, in accounts of every other nation, we must content ourselves with such a portion of veracity as they, in their omnipotence, shall think proper to bestow; for who can contradict Roman historians? The world was then all Roman, born so, or so adopted, so become; for conquest led but to incorporation. In that enormous, that amazing city, centered all knowledge, all pleasure, all wealth, all power. What wonder then if, midst a heterogeneous mass of inhabitants, raked out from every country under heaven, plurality of gods and variety of worships, licentious masters and permitted slaves, republican ideas and elective empire, all contrarieties of custom and of climate, miraculously accumulated in one vast swelling town, which Vossius says, though I believe him not, contained at one time fourteen millions

millions of residentiary dwellers? What wonder then, should fermentation act upon the foul congeries? What wonder then,

— Should Nature breed
Perverse! all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable! unutterable! and worse, &c.

That so she *did* breed, we are unable to doubt or to deny. Imperial Rome having consented to his death who lived alone to bless and purify mankind, became herself accursed, like sentenced Babylon, in scripture language, a cage for every unclean and hateful bird. A rapid succession of rulers now seemed striving for the palm of wickedness. Frantic Caligula, invested on his grandfather's death with the long sighed for purple, seemed chiefly diligent to dip it in human blood; and while he meditated its last disgrace, by giving his country a favourite horse for Consul, he robed himself in the dress sacred to divinity, and pushed to an unheard-of excess his studied profanations. To this mad master of an abject world succeeded heavy, sluggish-minded Claudius; whose soul, a fullen prisoner, seen but seldom, peeped out unwilling from its cage of clay, and viewed, unmoved, the vices of his Empress. When the last agonies had first broke in upon this preternatural tranquillity, the care of humankind, in evil hour, devolved upon nefarious Nero, whose name, first on the rolls of guilt and infamy, was pushed up by deliberate parricide to that abhorred pre-eminence. The murder of a mother was, in those days, a crime particularly detested, even by those who, in Macbeth's phrase, had *slept full with horrors*; and when at last this wretch dispatched himself to avoid punishment *a more majorum*, it was chiefly for Agrippina's death he dreaded to meet his own. Rome looked on tamely, while for his diversion he stuck the Christian martyrs up alive, in dresses daubed with tar, and set on fire to illuminate the town, when day hid his head indignant; or when he hunted them about his Colisseo,

lisseo, wrapt in the skins of some wild animal, thus to deceive the dogs into a cruelty their gentler nature would have shrunk from: but beasts appeared abroad, as if permitted to reproach *our* species with their superior virtue. Aulus Gellius relates the story of the lion whose grateful recollection spared the slave, observing, he had often met them in the streets together, during the reigns of Caligula and Claudius, collecting money from children and passers-by.

Mankind, meanwhile, was sunk in sad degeneracy, and seemed as if deserving of these dreadful leaders, who, although tyrants in wickedness, could not boast privileges exclusive of their subjects. Caius Cherea, when he killed Caligula, massacred, with unfeeling rage, his infant daughter in her mother's arms. Tacitus relates of many nobles a conduct little behind that of the Emperors themselves; and Pliny, like a good naturalist, calls Aquileius Regulus *omnium bipedum nequissimus*. Penurious Galba, and his gay successor, who had presided long in Nero's court as minister of pleasure, shewed, indeed, as some odd plants, most beautiful in death; for Otho, though immersed in sensuality, retained some trace, some latent spark of Virtue's unquenched flame, when the surrounding gloom shewed it to all advantage. He alone, for the first seventy years of *Retrospection*, he alone, till the tremendous day when a licentious soldiery lorded it in the metropolis, and tossed the bloated body of pampered Vitellius into Tyber, had proved himself not totally negligent of that overgrown state, which their best care could scarce have rendered happy; while ardent only to chase affrighted Vice into the arms of impossibility. In that strange cause they rushed on suicide, and braved assassinations, which few escaped, till Flavius Vespasian, rough, honest, artless; born near the Sabine farm, so famed for the simplicity and temperance of its possessors, tried to recover the credit of humanity, and prove that a hot soil, however strangled with its waste redundancy, will yet, among the weeds, produce some flowers. Thus we see Titus, brother to Domitian, and reflect that the wife of Pætus was cotemporary with Messalina.

lina. Nor was depravity confined to southern climates. Our British Cartimandua, justly for other crimes buried alive by Corbred, exhibited a steady, cold perfidiousness, scarce to be matched in any nation's annals, when she betrayed her gallant son-in-law, Caractacus, then greatest—when turning from the shows of Rome with scorn, he displayed soul of superior mould, not to be awed by mere appearances, after having contested with and conquered rough realities. Let *Retro-spection* too survey with pride the daring Boadicea's bold appeal for injured innocence, when aided by the Scottish hero, who punished perfidy in Cartimandua. She forced the Romans to confess our island, savage as it was, could not be subjugated by less than their best troops and wisest General, Agricola. That excellent commander, object of Tacitus's personal regard, an Emperor's envy and a nation's gratitude, after penetrating through the Caledonian forests, passing over what was called the Dolorous Mountain, and building the bridge and castle there near Stirling; after making way for the sacred truths of Christianity, by driving from druidic Mona its frantic superstitions, and softening the rugged Cambrian's fullen virtue by his urbanity; this great Agricola selected for himself the most delightful spot our variegated country boasts, and fixed his settled residence in Glo'stershire, leaving to Mr. Lysons' diligence the praise of having discovered traces of his grandeur, and giving to the retrospective eye an opportunity of observing how much the present times exceed the past, in powers of bending divers latitudes to the conveniences of human life, and forcing accommodation from rebellious climates, and seasons adverse to our vain desires. Voluptuous, rather than luxurious, an old Roman made small provision for his change of country, but set his feet on tessellated marbles alike at York or Baia. Accustomed to seek pleasure from his senses merely, he saw no method but to spur them forward: our English, who now visit every continent, learn to approximate their comforts by contrivance; wishing to gladden nature, not fatigue her. Pliny, indeed, speaks of a *subtle* method that Nero took to cool his water, by sinking
a glass

a glass vessel full in snow: but Nero did understand philosophy, and in the ceiling of his golden house displayed the planetary system. How little did he dream that not one stone of it would now be standing, while the fine temple dedicated by brave Vespasian to peace should yet remain, like its great patron's virtuous character, model of modest excellence! How little, too, did Columella think his book on agriculture would be read in Britain, when that deep science should be grown a toy, subservient to elegance, almost even to caprice! The sciences and arts, however, were not neglected, while Seneca taught wisdom, and Pliny studied nature; Lucan's bright style glistened in the beams of general illumination, and Persius added point to his sharp satire. Medicine, though innocent of many late discoveries gained by dissection, and waiting yet for Galen's sanguinary improvements, was well attended to; Hippocrates's aphorisms contained enough; and though Macrobius says too much of their perfection, that seems to have been no bad set of rules which could keep men alive, who sapped and battered their constitution by habits of intemperate grossness. Let something however be allowed to different customs, and let the *Retrospectors* of past ages own, that those nightly prowlers through our London streets, who dig up the peaceful mansions of the dead, and those unfeeling surgeons that dissect them, would, by their conduct, have awakened Claudius to command some punishment for such offence, and roused Tiberius to resume his post, that impiety like theirs might not be passed over in silence. Thus, though Celsus and Epictetus graced these times; though Juvenal censured, and Josephus wrote; though polished Martial seems particularly to delight in displaying a keenness of remark and acuteness of observation, to which, by future ages, so little can be added; we see the spirit of enquiry in some things repressed, from delicacy little to be expected, and Ignorance laying her successful traps for Study to drop into unawares. Suetonius, for example, whom Mr. Gibbon calls the diligent and accurate, tells how a mule foaled on the investing old

Galba with the purple, a fact by which philosophy and common experience are alike insulted. But that biographer introduces no foreign though but for weeks, not years, without a string of prodigies unworthy even of a woman's story over a winter's fire. Witness the ass, whose lucky name of *Nicon* * is brought in as omen of Augustus's prosperity. Tacitus's amazement at the lengthened nights in the north, so sweetly, so poetically expressed, betrays his scanty knowledge of astronomy; † and Pliny verily believes the existence of a phoenix, which was but going backward in discovery: Herodotus despised that fable long before. The jack-daw, well instructed by some shoemaker to compliment the Cæsars with Good-day, Tiberius, Good-day, Drusus, &c. was the true phoenix among birds in those times. A rival shoemaker, however, wrung his neck off, because he had obtained the Emperor's notice; which the more liberal populace resenting, pulled down the spiteful fellow's house, burying the crow with great solemnity. That the British channel ever flowed with blood, *must* have been false; although related about the 60th year after our Lord's ascension, by historians; and at the very close of the first century, it is said Deccebalus deceived the warlike Romans, by causing a forest to be felled in the night, and armour stuck upon the stocks of trees. Xiphilinus, patriarch of Constantinople, is our authority for this fact, apparently incredible, although some stratagem of the kind seems to have obtained belief in the world ever since Abimelech; who made

* *Nicon* means victorious, I have heard. Do we call an ass *Nicky*, from this fortunate one seen by Octavius? The statue, recording both beast and driver, was one of the antiquities destroyed at Constantinople by the Latins, and lamented by Nicetas, in a fragment preserved in the Bodleian Library. It proves the accident known to be no *fable*.

† Juvenal seems to have known the peculiarities of our islands well enough.

Armo quid ultra

Littora juverne promovimus et modo captas

Orcades, et minima contentos nocte Britannos.

his

his foldiers each of them cut a bough, and carry before them to conceal their numbers; thus unperceived advancing to the tower he meant to destroy, then throwing the wood at its feet, soon set the place on fire. Shakespear makes this familiar to us on the stage; but Cæsar's veterans could not surely have been so imposed upon. Of the Christian persecutions during all these reigns, more has not been asserted by history, however, than daily examination amply confirms. Gibbon, with triumph, pretends to find out what Jortin, with candour, had before allowed; that the neglect shewn by bad princes towards all religion was less unfavourable to the progress of ours, than that active zeal for Paganism which distinguished the pious ones. Jortin is indeed generous to the scoffers, and they have repaid him as he says the Romanists did Grotius, with such gratitude as might be well expected. He who delights in stroking a tyger with intention to hear him purr, will probably lose a finger in course of the experiment. The ears and eyes of English travellers to Rome, turn away disgusted with the proofs of cruelty authorized by the mischievous wantonness of wild Caligula upon a race of harmless mortals, who, had they *not* been Christians, would have engaged the tender pity of every modern infidel, for the disinterested bravery with which they were well known to have sheltered one another, while they exposed themselves; contrasting the courage and virtue of St. Paul against the profligacy and cowardice of Nero, a dissimilitude not to be matched for remoteness within the limits of humanity. When that detested wretch, however, destroyed the house and lineage of Cæsar, by striking with his heel his own half-formed image in the womb of his once-loved Poppæa, who owed the dreadful death, it is said, to her soft pleadings for a Christian martyr.*—Offended heaven sent a sudden

* Those who attribute Nero's sudden fury to his wife's teizing him, because he staid too long at the chariot race, seem to think she took strange liberties indeed with so tremendous a tyrant. I rather fancy, with our early church writers, that the poor Empress leaned towards Christianity. Be that as it will, the family of Julius was

thunderbolt, and dashed the gold cup from the tyrant's hand. Thunderbolts at Rome are certainly no prodigies, though that perhaps had its peculiar commission. Unnatural sins cry out for vengeance out of Nature's bounds; and that portents do mark important incidents sometimes, though many pass without being so noticed, it would be very difficult and very useless to deny. All Titus's army saw the meteor which, resembling a flaming sword, hung over Jerusalem's devoted walls; the gates of whose temple burst open seven years before at Pentecost, when voices were heard in the air, and evident miracles proclaimed *their* destruction who helped to crucify the Holy One of Israel. The great prophetic word had said expressly, that mortals then alive should see that temple's final end whence he, its SHEKINAH, was chased with ignominy; and before fourscore years were yet expired, one stone was literally not standing on another; whilst the heroic youth appointed to destroy it, resembling in character and manners Cyrus, who overthrew the Babylon they hated; was called, in admiration of his superior excellence, Delight of human kind. Now too, as if the world would fain repose after the bloody contests between Otho and Vitellius, and after this still more striking vengeance on the Jews, 110,000 of whose lives were lost during the siege, and 97,000 prisoners carried to Rome; Vespasian shut the temple of Janus, and dedicated his heaven-permitted spoils to peace. Much of the fabrick where they were deposited is standing while I write; and the fine arch, perpetuating the triumph of Titus, seems to have acquired beauties, not lost them, by time. Assisting *Retrospection's* sight it stands, and waits His second coming whose former mission it confirms. Holinshed and Buchanan say, that Christianity was in these days carried to Britain by St. Joseph of Arimathea—a tincture

extinguished by the blow which killed the unborn infant. Suetonius wrote the lives of twelve men, who have for ages since been called the twelve Cæsars; but 'tis in compliment to the writer.

of

of whose love for riches pervades us still. That opulence overwhelmed not *his* faith, but rather confirmed him in practice of beneficence, seems hitherto not wholly forgotten by those who are descended from his converts; and if the religion he planted is really taking flight from other countries of Europe, *here* may it leave its last remains! and angels roll the stone to keep it in, till the great day of general resurrection. Vesuvius meanwhile inflamed his neighbouring plains, so justly called Phlegræan; the mountain raged with unexampled fury; hot ashes, tost in air, darkened the sun at Rome, 113 miles from the explosion, causing a temporary, and for some time, an incomprehensible eclipse.

On the same hour a dreadful pestilence begun that waste which lasted many weeks; and, ranging through the contaminated town, thinned in some measure the immense numbers, and lightened the mass of mankind which tumefied it even to bursting. Such was the state of the metropolis. Around warm Naples and her polluted environs, indignant earth is seen by *Retrospection's* eye (much like the deity they worshipped, Saturn) swallowing her sons alive. The shaggy cavern which conceals a murderer, opens by power unseen; the rocks divide; sudden destruction drops on the inhabitants. The peaceful villa, retreat perhaps of study, sinks below the ground: the gaudy amphitheatre becomes a part of it; nor lets one fruitful season pass away, before, new-clothed with useful vegetation, it learns to supply posterity with food—Comus and Momus fly disgraced away, and laughing Ceres reassumes the land. Boundless curiosity too, daughter of affluent wealth, and parent of general knowledge; impatient of delay, and ardent for immediate gratification, now robbed the world of Pliny's future labours: and while hot Parthenope panted amid volcanic fires, and flames of accident or strange caprice devoured the streets of Rome, burning for three nights and days with unremitting violence—up from the cooler ocean in the north rose the low rudiments of Rotterdam, destined to be the birth-place of Erasmus. Nearly with
her

her coeval sprang in Spain the places now known by names of Bilbao and St. Jago di Compostella, first fabricated however by Titus, who, in honour of his father, called it Flavio Briga, and Flavio Brigantum. Yet then, and *before then*, was London *copia negotiatorum, et com-
meatu maxime celebre*.* Chester and Leicester were in being, I believe, and York a favourite residence of Romans. Lanquet would make us think *that* town cotemporary with Sefak, king of Egypt, and Jeroboam, king in Israel; he says 'twas built by Ebranck, probably † Evanck, a British leader, of whose works yet remain part of the castle of Mayden, in Edinburgh, and some stones at the castle at Dunbar. Pliny calls the first Castrum alatum; but 'tis best worth *Retrospection's* glance to observe, that this old chieftain's name is *yet* preserved, in signatures of our archbishop.‡ Strabo places gold and silver among the products of Britain, and Polydore Virgil says, that cherry-trees were planted here in the days of Marius and Sylla. The building of *Billinggate* by *Belinus*, brother to Brennus, who sacked Rome, is not so well authenticated; but as the word Brennos means a king yet in the old British language, one may conclude that word was rather his appellation than his name, among the Cimbri whom he led to Italy. But our immediate eye is fixed on the Vespasians, and on the joint triumph of father and son, united in glory, in excellence, and in affection—A light heart, and a sort of unimperial cheerfulness seems to discriminate the character of Flavius, among whose odd replies, full of foldier-like humour, I cannot help relating, that when his courtiers told him of the comet, and expressed fears for *him* as a bad omen, I rather think, says he, it must relate to the king of Parthia, for my own

* So says Tacitus himself. *A place particularly celebrated for the number of its merchants and for trade.* This was in Nero's time, towards fifty years after our Lord's ascension.

† Evancke, in Welch, means the young *now*.

‡ He signs his name John or Thomas Eboracensis.

part: you see it has long red hair, just like his—and *I am bald*. A freedman of Nero's too, Phœbus by name, had seen the old General fast asleep while his master was acting a lady's part upon the stage; and leave the city, said the insolent spy, or you'll repent this nap. Where must I go? replied Vespasian, waking. *To the gallows*, returned the pandar, and said no more. When Flavius was made Emperor this fellow came cringing, and offered him his head. Leave the town, said Flavius, mimicking the voice he had spoken in. Where would Cæsar command me to retire? *To the gallows*, answered the Emperor in good humour, and forebore further to punish a creature, who, perhaps, added he, saved my life from his tyrant's rage, by his neglect.* So much for peculiarity of manners. His heart shewed resemblance to that of his favourite son, when, though Vitellius was his greatest enemy, he sought out the daughter of his foe, and fortune'd her, marrying her splendidly to a patrician house. Forgiveness is a virtue too good for Pagans somehow—I feel as if I grudged it them. Titus meanwhile ever studious to ascend the heights of moral perfection, lived in the practice of self-denying virtue from the first day of his association to power: he had, when prince, protected a favourite dancer, but the figurante expecting marks of favour from past fondness, was instantly dismissed; that admirable youth thought only how to live and how to reign, and drove seduction from him with diligence, whether it bore the form of Bathyllus or Berenice.† Having been saluted emperor fifteen times, he died, expressing regret for only one action of his life. Historians think that he repented pardoning his most degenerate brother, young Domitian, whose impatience for the purple

* Vespasian had little care for *La petite Morale*—witness the well-known tale of his bidding Titus smell to the coin which was paid on his tax upon urine. And when he was *Ædile*, in Caligula's time, he kept the streets of Rome so dirty, that the Emperor calling him up to his horse's side, purposely splashed the mud into his face.

† Bathyllus 18 years old, Berenice 48—Gibbon says 50. 10th vol. 8vo. edit. p. 129.

had

had led him into plots against the state. On his accession, Rome with surprise, beheld Agricola recalled from Britain, and heard her timorous tyrant confess his worth; but sending him into retirement, poisoned him sily. This odious sovereign over hapless humanity, hated all excellence, and feared all power. Lucullus, sent lieutenant into Albion, instead of seeking pearls, which were, I know not why, expected from the coast of North Wales—began a manufacture of spears near Sheffield,—and those who used, called them *Lucullians*. This was enough; Domitian heard of it, and the poor deputy was strangled in his tent. 'Twas to the same pusillanimity that senatorial Glabrio owed his death—the lion he was thrown to yielded up the contest, and the unworthy son of brave Vespasian had him immediately dispatched, for fear himself might suffer by such giddy valour. St. John rising unhurt out of the boiling cauldron might well amaze a mind so meanly constructed. An anecdote of that Apostle, told by some early ecclesiastical author,* will shew that painting must have been at a low ebb in those days, although Domitian loved the arts, and was a literary character. When the irrevocable sentence was gone forth, and our Lord's favourite disciple was preparing for his banishment to Patmos, at one of the christian houses where he had visited familiarly, and went of course on the last night to take leave of his friends—he saw a large head hanging up. You will then never be weary of these frightful figures, Jupiter or Pluto, or whatever you call them, cried he; it breaks my heart to see this hideous face set up so, just upon my going away. Dear father! exclaimed the mistress of the mansion, 'tis you that break *our* hearts. This head is neither Jupiter nor Pluto, but your own portrait in your own dress; drawn by my cousin Caius, who is famed for never missing a likeness, and he did this by memory—knowing you would not fit. The Apostle laughed, and begged them to take it down. A story Hegesippus tells is better known; how reports having been long current, that from David a quondum

* Leucius.

king of the Hebrews, should spring in future times a sovereign of the world and judge of all mankind. Domitian felt himself tormented by suspicious fears, and caused a close enquiry to be made, if any of that race yet remained alive : two grandsons or nephews of St. Jude were found ; well pleased to own the son of Jesse for their ancestor, and claiming kindred with Messiah's human nature. The Emperor called them to his presence and was consoled ; they possessed thirty-nine acres only of earth between them, their hands were hard with labour, their backs bent with toil ; curiosity, however, prompted him to ask, of what nature was the *kingdom* he had heard and read about. They replied that it was neither terrestrial nor transitory, but celestial and everlasting ; that Christ, with whom their uncle had conversed on earth, should come to it again at the consummation of all things, and judge mankind according to their works.

Domitian thought little concerning heavenly kingdoms, and sent the two men quietly away. Vices are often punished by their contraries, the miser hoards against a day of want, which he accelerates by self-denial : whilst wilfully perverse, unbelief is frequently the dupe to credulous superstition. Thus the notion of second sight was fondly received by an anxious-minded sovereign, who rejected with scorn the truths of Christianity. A battle, for example, was fought upon the Rhine, and on some day, when all were expecting the event, a mad fellow ran naked through the principal streets, crying *vic-toria* as he danced along. Domitian commanded rejoicings to be made, as if a courier had come from Germany with the news ; which, on arrival, did indeed confirm the crazy vagabond's early impresson. Second sight was now gaining ground among all ranks ; but the best instance of it, for benefit of all his subjects, was that of their unworthy Emperor's own death, presented preternaturally as many thought, before the eyes of Appollonius Tyanæus, then teaching philosophy in his own school at Ephesus ; where, stopping in the middle of the lecture, he suddenly cried out, *Now, courage Stephanus, and strike the tyrant.* Stephanus, one of the chamberlains, had indeed, at that very moment,

contrived admission to his prince's presence, wearing his arm in a scarf the better to prevent suspicion, and conceal a dagger, which, while Domitian was employed in reading over a list of names, the bold assassin struck to his heart, and ended a life which had long kept mankind in perpetual alarm. The strolling conjurer, who saw in Asia what was at the same instant acting in Rome, is the person to whom we are obliged for the hack phrase *He has the black dog upon his back*, when people are oppressed by melancholy and ill-humour. Dr. Henry More says, that this Appollonius told the Greeks he had a spirit following him about in form of a black dog, which leaping on his back, would make him atrabilious. The learned Hugo Grotius gives credit to this second fight with regard to Domitian. I know not whether he believes in the *black dog*. A better proof that the world was grown weary of such a ruler, was the frequent repetitions of the word *αρχῇ* written on the Emperor's statues, triumphal arches, &c. it means *enough*; much like the modern Italian word *basta*: and the trick was in the spirit of modern pasquinades.

And now the first *hundred years* after our Saviour's appearance upon earth drawing fast towards a conclusion, the *retrospective* eye views with delight some seeds of his newly founded worship, dropt almost into every country here in Europe; seven churches of Asia too openly professing the faith, besides Antioch, where Christians first were called such. That these seven churches, which were written to by Saint John—by name; and which ranked neither with those of Antioch or of Rome, did actually at that time represent the seven Protestant churches, which have in later days dissented both from Greek and Roman rituals; professing purer manners, and a less embarrassed creed—it is not my intention either to assert or to deny. Certain it is, that of these last seven one has apostatized, who once gloried in her riches like that of Laodicea.* Our attention meantime being di-

* 'Tis odd enough that Laodicea, like Holland, was a maritime situation—its name means *ad mare*, as scholars tell me.

rected to the first century after our Lord's ascension, will observe that, although persecuted by repeated tyrannies without, and clouded by acknowledged heresies within, the silent growth of that wide spreading tree beneath whose shade the world finds all repose, worked unobserved its way. Trodden down by tyrants, warmed by the blood of martyrs, the grain of mustard-seed cast into an unheeded spot of that vast iron empire, which the first Cæsar and his successors so long maintained over oppressed mankind—in Nerva's gentler day ventured to unfold its beauties. The pall and cross, now instituted by Clemens, adorned the infant church, where *he* first set the bishop's rustic throne conspicuous from the rest; and having preferred to himself that Linus, mentioned by St. Paul in one of his epistles, modestly accepted the dignity of president, and post of peculiar care, just time enough to suffer for his elevation, when Trajan exiled him into Iberia for not having sacrificed to the immortal memory of some dead emperor, raised to the rank of gods by Pagan folly. Nerva was the first we read of who would have no statue at all erected to commemorate his soft serenity. Rome had made great advances in her adulation since Augustus's time. When a player called *him* Dominus, we are told the people all stared and the sovereign chid; but Martial speaks in another strain to Domitian, and Pliny tires one with My Lording Trajan. Vitellius had pushed flattery as far as it would go, to stupid Claudius and crazy Caligula, whose madness, when he made love to the moon, that courtier contrived to encrease, by swearing he saw encouragement in Phœbe's eyes; to Nerva none could gain access by such tricks. Tranquillity of mind and unoffending meekness of spirit marked his peaceful reign, yet he encouraged harmless sports, and called theatrical professors home, who had fled affrighted from his predecessor. Character is always uniform if well understood. Nerva was a grave man, yet he liked a pantomime; Domitian was a proud man, he hated dancers and actors, and stage exhibitors of all kinds; Nero was a vain man, he would be a public performer himself.

But now St. John returned from banishment in Patmos, published those prophetic wonders which were there revealed to him ; leaving the mystic veil that covers them from common sight, to be gently removed or lifted up respectfully by Time's slow, certain hand, which gradually disclosing some feature yet unseen ; inclines mankind from observation of what's already understood, to venerate and expect confirmation of what remains. Now too, a certain Jew, converted to our faith, seems to have written, as it were, a commentary on the Apocalypse, which loses credit among Christians chiefly because composed under the fictitious name of Esdras, and extant only in Arabic and Latin ; although many beautiful and evangelical sentences may certainly be found there, and some strange predictions, we must not call them prophecies ; which are in our own days as strangely come to pass. The large mixture of fables, however, like those afterwards collected into the Thalmud, destroying all possibility of the book's being authentic, and our church having agreed with that of Rome to vote it as it surely is, apocryphal ; hinders many from reading, what would at least contribute to render the Revelations better understood, as the eloquent author was coetaneous with St. John. Here then may *Retrospection* rest awhile ; and if the next chapter should present few things to the reader's eye, except some characters, *and those compressed*, of future emperors ; let us confess they are the leading features—the luminous spots : since upon *them* the world, and all which it contained, depended. When the chain breaks and the parts falling, separate ; Rome will have smaller share of our attention.

C H A P. II.

CONTAINING THE SECOND CENTURY;

FROM TRAJAN TO CARACALLA.

WHAT was once said of the style of some writer by his contemporaries, is true of the imperial throne of Rome, *Ubi bene, nemo melius; ubi male, nemo pejus*. We now are to enjoy the pleasing *Retrospect* of five princes in immediate succession, who ran the race of excellence with ardour, no way surpassed by that which their predecessors (all but the two Vespasians) shewed in the cause of vice: nor can the lofty powers of high-graced humanity be further carried towards philosophical perfection, than these five admirable mortals pushed them. Had the last public deed of Nerva been his *sole* act of royal authority, the world would have united to applaud and thank him; when he united with himself in all the honours and the cares of state, immortal Trajan—a Spaniard, like himself; but with more energy of mind and character, to put his virtues into active motion. The pupil of Plutarch then, the familiar correspondent of the younger Pliny, the cheerful comrade of his gallant soldiers, entered the world's metropolis on foot, surrounded by his hardy veterans, who in a few years more attended his triumph when Rome rejoiced 120 days together; having seen her sovereign, and that of the whole earth; to his endowments in the arts of peace, add a reputation for military glory, undiminished by the fame of any who preceded, unrivalled by all who followed him. The veneration consequent on such decided superiority was not a transient or a temporary passion. When Theodosius was invested with the purple, 300 years after the times we are reviewing, *Sis felicior Augusto, melior TRAJANO*, was the cry. His firm and steady courage kept both
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the capital and provinces in awe. No plots darkened his brilliant reign, no cruelties (except against our Christian faith) were suffered to stain it; nor was the royal ear deaf to supplications, even for what his strong attachment to the religion of his ancestors forbade him to encourage. At suit of Tyberianus, governor of Palestine, he stopt that persecution which Pliny had before then persuaded him to relax; although too late to save from the fury of wild beasts the good Bishop of Antioch, who was sent bound thence all the way to Rome, and there thrown, with unrelenting severity, to lions. Scaliger can scarce believe *this* possible; yet why not? In the year 1796, probably later still, we know that Spaniards made it their sport to see noble and innocuous animals mangle each other; when the generous horse, returning at command to face the horns of a justly enraged bull, trailed his long entrails after him round the arena, in consequence of the first wound, yet giving not the cruel contest up till death. Lisbon too, scarce half a century ago, exhibited an *Auto da Fé*, where human criminals were burned alive for entertainment of the first nobility; when *Christian ladies* expressed their delight in such amusement, no less sensibly than Roman matrons and virgins felt in Trajan's time, when naked gladiators, groaning, died, and panthers tore each other's spotted skins, to please a multitude made more ferocious by the frequenting of such exhibitions.

Rome qui prodiguait par un mépris bizarre
A tout peuple étranger le titre de barbare,
Ne repaissait ses yeux que des pleurs de mortels,
Et de sang inondait ses théâtres cruels.
Là, sous les dents d'un ours, l'esclave méprisable,
Ne sait que faire entendre une voix lamentable;
Mais le gladiateur mieux instruit à mourir,
Semble percé des coups expirer sans souffrir:
Si la nature en lui plus long-temps vigoureuse
En retardant la mort la rend plus douloureuse;
Hâtez-vous d'applaudir avec une joie égale,
Vous graves sénateurs, et toi jeune vestale.

RACINE.

And Lipsius does say seriously, that no war ever took as many lives off in one year, as did the shows of Rome under their favourite sovereign, who was however, justly denominated *optimus bonorum*.

It was he who threw the beautiful bridge over that branch of Danube called Iantra, of which some fine remains are yet existing; it once consisted of no fewer than twenty arches, and, by Mr. Du Tems' mensuration, exceeded ours at Westminster 2146 feet. He likewise built the city Marcianopolis, called so in honour of his sister Marcia. It is now known to the Bulgarians by name of Prebislav, but the Venetians still say Marzenopoli. The town erected on purpose to commemorate his truly warlike exploits retains its merited appellation Nicopolis, or, as we should say, *Victoria*. The pillar set up at Rome for him, adorned with all his feats of arms in Dacia, death never suffered him to see; but before it had robbed the world of such a hero, he had adopted, with judicious care, a successor from his own nation, which may not only boast the best and bravest of soldiers in him, whose high renown will long outlast the column erected to his memory; but also may in Adrian, who succeeded, admire, with equal justice, the most eloquent and all-accomplished prince that ever adorned the imperial purple. *He*, not content with common marks of esteem and gratitude shewn to his predecessor, placed his best statue in the curule chair; and, as the sad procession rolled along, Rome saw her favourite warrior triumph *after* death. This duty once discharged, the present Emperor being, as he said, persuaded that a sovereign was only made such for the people's good, began his reign by instantly forgiving the forty millions debt to government. His next act was to punish the rebellious Jews, who really had ravaged the fine isle of Cyprus with a fury worthy beasts or birds of prey; having not only wasted the whole country, and massacred 240,000 inhabitants, sparing neither age nor sex; but forcing those few wretches whom their rage had rolled over, to eat their own dead friends; and purchase, by concessions no Christian can describe, a hated though short existence. Such conduct excited

Adrian's

Adrian's detestation; and he resolved not only to chastise, but mortify a people, whose ill understood religion he confounded with our own; and set a swine's effigies over the gate at Bethlehem, consecrating a grove to Venus not far off, whilst he prophaned the spot their temple stood on with every thing he heard the Hebrews most abhorred; rebuilding some of the decayed suburbs too, as an excuse for changing of its name to *Ælia*.* There he failed; the name was never altered, nor the people ever destroyed. The bush of Moses still burns on from age to age, still unconsumed, a beacon to the world. Let us a moment turn aside, like Moses, and take a *Retrospect* of that great sight. When King Agrippa went to Alexandria, about the year of our Lord 39 or 40, with a great train and pomp, somewhat exceeding that of a tributary prince, the people caught a fancy that his face resembled that of a tame idiot who ran about the streets, his name Carabbas. The populace, sensible that such a joke would not displease Caligula, dressed up the wretch in a long purple gown, and putting on his head a paper diadem, hunted him up and down under Agrippa's windows, crying, Hail, King of the Jews! Hail, King of the Jews! Usher and Tillemont have not left this circumstance without the remarks natural to a Christian; but a worse fate would have befallen him, had not that Emperor's assassination prevented the punishments destined to Petronius for delaying, at request of Agrippa, to set the tyrant's statue in the temple; all Israel had resolved on general migration, meaning to leave their province, so prophaned, for famine to desolate, or beasts possess. Titinius Rufus, next after Vespasian, trode down that district in a dreadful manner; and Adrian's governor, Julius Severus, so wasted the whole territory, burning

* Jerusalem was known by the name of *Cadytis* to Herodotus. The word means holy, or holy residence, as I have been told; perhaps they considered it as sacred, from its being the dwelling place of Melchisedek. D'Anville tells us, that the Arabs now call it *Bēitel*, *Makdés*, and *Kads She it*,
 or *Bethel*, or *Cadytis*. } The Holy, in *their* language.
 or *God's House*.

their

their castles, and ploughing up their strong places, after dispatching 58,000 of the inhabitants—that Fuller says it never *did* recover; and in his book upon the Holy War observes, that “ ’tis no marvel if so thin a meadow were quickly mown by him who had plenty of hands to work.” But we return and follow Adrian to Britain, which, to say true, suffered some little from his displeasure; though Selden says his general, Coilus, built Colchester in Essex, if it was not even then known by name of *Caer Colin* among the old inhabitants. Some traces too of his turf-wall, or mound, may be seen in Cumberland still: and perhaps he, whose spirit of travelling prompted him to visit such remote parts of the Roman empire, might have been induced to pass more time amidst our northern provinces, had not his dainty minion, fair *Antinous*, been hastily knocked down by some rough British hand; an insult his great master could not be pleased with, yet had more magnanimity than to resent, except by leaving the island. That taste for seeing various life, however, which suggested his journey hither, prompted him to continue it through his own native country Spain, to *Afric*, where he rebuilt *Carthage*, and visited the *Nile*. But although he erected a monument for his horse *Borysthene*, and set up a pillar to his memory near *Barcelona*, we must remember that the ancients often paid funeral honours to their favourite animals. The epitaph on *Craffus’s* mule is preserved by *Porcacchi*, a Tuscan writer, who found the stone between *Rome* and *Tivoli*. Her name was *Cincia*, if I remember right: and although *Adrian* filled half Europe with fine statues of his less valuable favourite, the beautiful youth who fell into the *Nile*, and there was drowned; yet suffered this philosophic sovereign no idle whims, no vicious propensities, to mingle with his studies or his state affairs; but apparently triumphed in the almost boundless capacity of a mind which could solve the hardest problems of *Euclid*, and plan with elegance of architecture a temple to *Love*: who encouraged all artists, and was excelled by none: whose powers of rhetoric kept pace with the firmness of his logical disputations: and whose

VOL. I. F progress

progress through his widely extended empire was marked in every part of it by some benefit conferred.

Adrianople, the old Orestia, he repaired, and called it after himself; because, having been built by parricide, he deemed it of ill omen. But though he delighted in the baths of Aix la Chapelle, as Granus, a general of some former reign, had originally discovered the waters' efficacy, he confirmed the appellation *Aquis Granum*, and by that name the town is still called by Italians, with very little alteration. A descendant of that General's (called Nero's half brother in Isaacson's Chronology) *Serenus Granus*, wrote about the year 127 so excellent an apology for the poor Christians, that Adrian had thoughts of building them a church, but suffered other occupations to intervene. Meanwhile Anacletus had prohibited, in Trajan's time, that any bishop should wear long curling hair, as did the gay young Romans, upon which the clergy were soon distinguished by a *tonsure*; and Alexander I., styled by his own decretary Archbishop of Rome, instituted holy water for purification of those who should come unprepared to church; some salt was added in a natural spirit of imitation; the lustral water had salt mixed with it. By his command, likewise, water was mixed with wine in the sacrament, most probably because from our Redeemer's side flowed blood and water. This hapless primate was martyr'd, contrary to Government's intent, during some accidental absence of the Emperor; who now caused Pompey's tomb to be repaired, set up an honorary remembrance of Epaminondas in the plains of Mantinæa, and erected for his own the Moles Adriani, now Castle St. Angelo;—whilst Sixtus I. in thankfulness to heaven for that remission of misery which our church enjoyed, sung the Trisagion, or hymn, of Holy! Holy! Holy Lord God of Sabaoth! in open day; and sent public missionaries into Gaul for conversion of profelytes, at which the court connived. Ill health now stopt the sovereign's further travels, yet would he not yield to its enfeebling power: he still, as usual, bathed in a crowd of people, where he one day perceived a poor old

old foldier (whom he had formerly obferved in his own legion) now fo friendlefs, as to have no one to perform for him the common office of a bathing guide, to fcraper or curry his back, as it was then the mode, fo that he was obliged to rub himfelf againft the wall, as beafts do. Adrian, who recollected both his perfon and good fervices, asked him the reafon why? 'Tis, faid the foldier, Sir, becaufe I have no fervant. The Emperor immediately fent him three flaves, and a fmall penfion to maintain them. Such an action foon drew its natural confequences; for fashions alter, but human nature is the fame. Numberlefs old men took the fame method of obtaining notice from fo charitable a Prince. Our Spaniard, not duped however, nor as it appears much difgusted by fuch conduct, quietly provided thofe fellows each a *frigil*, and laughingly advifed them *to curry one another*.* It was time though to be ferious. Many diforders gathering round his conftitution, he had, fome months before the time we treat of, adopted Lucius Verus Commodus, who died before his friend, leaving an infant fon. Of this man nothing is I think recorded, but that he lay on matreffes of rofes, rendered elaftic by their quantity and number; and that he firft brought up the cuftom of making footmen run before a carriage. Thofe deftined for his ufe were boys, eminent in perfonal beauty, drefled like the four winds, and their Lord called them *Volanti*—they were fo drefled at Rome when I was there, and called fo then. Adrian next fought an heir among the Stoics, though he himfelf and his immediate favourites were of the Epicuræan fchool. His laft felection lighted on the man, whofe pure morality cafts that of every other monarch into fhade; and fearful left death fhould rob the Romans foon of fuch a parent, he wifhed him to entail the fucceffion on ftill further; then, having provided pofterity with the protektion of the Antonines, retired to Baia, consulting his health only. In that

* The operation of champooing, in the eaft, feems another manner of producing a like effect.

delightful retreat it was, that he composed the well-known lines addressed to his departing soul; and as he had lived a philosopher, desired to die a poet.* His last act of authority almost, was shipping off incredible numbers of Jewish captives into Spain, where they subsisted by working in the gold and silver mines, both in the character of labourer and trader, till some time about the year 1500 they were expelled either by Ferdinand or Emanuel. A *Retrospect* of that peculiar circumstance is useful, to elucidate the cause of jealousy which Spaniards have been always apt to display, concerning the antiquity of their own families; of which the true source is, fear lest they should be suspected of sharing this old Jewish, or else Moorish blood. When Sancho is asked about his master's genealogy, *De los Christianos mas viejos*, is his reply. That country, which was to Italy in Adrian's time what Mexico has since been to all Europe, afforded no ill-devised retreat to Hebrew avarice and genius for mean traffic; but one wonders why those mines should now rest quiet, whence Pliny says 20,000 pounds weight of gold were annually received at Rome. There is indeed a tradition, that the shepherds who kept goats in Galicia or Asturia, having made a fire to burn some stubbed rosemary, never could quench it; and having often tried, left it at length to end as chance directed; the fire then catching volcanic matter, fused all the metal by its violence, and carried away to sea. Some rivulets there, as in Peru, are now called *Lavaderos*, from having washed ores and minerals in their stream: some grains of gold are yet to be found too; but they consider the mines as ruined by some accident, and can relate none but this. Titus Antoninus meanwhile, so justly surnamed Pius,

* Animula vagula blandula,
Hospes comesque corporis,
Quæ nunc abibis in loca!
Pallidula rigida nudula,
Nec ut soles dabis joca.

Gentle Soul! a moment stay,
Whither wouldst thou wing thy way?
Cheer once more thy house of clay,
Once more prattle and be gay:
See thy fluttering pinions play—
Gentle Soul, a moment stay!

the

the successor of Adrian, and the sixteenth emperor of Rome, fought for no treasures, except in his own heart; desired no conquests, unless over himself; no wars, but with those appetites and passions, which however he wished not to annihilate but to restrain; inasmuch as they lead men to heroic actions, while under the dominion and guidance of that reason which, as heaven's last, best gift, this wise and virtuous Prince misused not in subtle disputations or rhetorical flowers, but exercised in a perpetual attention to his duty, in an active and paternal care of that state he was called to command—preferring, on all occasions, modesty to wit; well-judged beneficence, to ostentatious display of sentiment. In proof of his liberality, he gave up, on his accession, the immense civil list appointed for the maintenance of imperial splendour; desiring to live frugally, after the old Roman fashion, with one woman only, his wife, the first Faustina; depending on his own superior merit to awe that world which he disdained to dazzle. But, though he encouraged learned men, particularly Appollonius Chalcedicus, his tutor, though he rewarded Justin, and received, well pleased, the dedication of his epitome; he considered goodness as much nearer in claim for favours, than either personal prowess or mental endowment. He would rather hear, he said, of one citizen saved, than of a thousand enemies destroyed. In his uncommon character was verified the saying of that sage, who pronounced her the best woman of whom least could be said out of her own house—while it is the reign of Titus that we are told, affords of all others the fewest materials for history. In his day Lent was first instituted, as an observation of our church; Telesphorus chanted the *Gloria in Excelsis*; and Hyginus, a Greek by birth, called himself *Pope*. His successor, a native of Aquileia, consecrated Christian virgins, in imitation of the vestals revered by Pagan superstition: their having been priests to some heathen deity themselves, before conversion, might lead their thoughts perhaps in the same track. I take the commonly accepted chronology, and will not lose my time to prove or disavow it. Many mistakes have been made by the wisest, concerning

concerning the years when such events befell; and we are now at such enormous distance, that *Retrospection* may easily be deceived. Remoteness has the same effect upon the mind as on the eye; and as the traveller to Italy looks back from the first heights of Savoy he has climbed, and sees the fertile provinces of France approximated by the eminence from which he views them; the Rhone contracted, till he cries with Dyer,

A step, methinks, might pass the stream;
So little distant dangers seem.

So feels the reader of this trifling summary. But let him, like the traveller, feel good-humoured too, and so amused by the variety of objects, as not to quarrel with the glass he sees them through. Much has been said by authors about Quintilian, and whether he lived now or long before; but there were three of the same name and family, and all supremely eminent for talents. He who said, *Natura nos ad mentem optimam genuit*, must, one would think, have lived under the Antonines. But if the baptismal font was in their day, though not by their desire, erected to purify mankind from that original and native sin, of which even they, transcendent creatures as they were, had sure a taint; we must remember that Crescens and Cerdon* flourished in that century, and Apuleius wrote his *Golden Ass*. He wrote, beside, a pretty allegorical fable of Cupid and Psyche, in which the theory of man's fall and restoration are elegantly alluded to, with embellishments both from the true and false religions; but Apuleius had been much among the Platonists, who mysticized every thing. Marino hands down the same tale to modern times; Moliere took it from Marino, and I have myself seen it represented in a pantomime ballet. Diogenes Laertius gave to mankind the lives of the philosophers during that century; whence Menage's notes grew up in France, and Stanley's

* Two notorious heretics.

folio in Great Britain. Ptolemy too attracted notice from the world in those days; and if his new invented system was not better than that in use before, it had at least the merit of more deep research. The old hypothesis however, gained more lasting praise, protracted through Pythagoras, Copernicus, and Newton; but *Almagest*, so the Arabians afterwards called the Ptolomæan labours when digested, continued the contest many years. This writer drew from Egypt his skill in the science of astrology. The *rainbow* and *dove*, symbols of peace since Noah left the ark, were known by familiar names at Alexandria: Cleopatra's maids were called Charmion* and Iras, even in Mark Antony's time; and the favourite hieroglyphics which those names denote, the dove and rainbow, may this day be seen on the great obelisk brought by Caligula (chiefly for that reason, I believe) to Rome. Egyptian superstitions obtained exceedingly among the emperors. Adrian had one room filled with their deities; and Caligula had once a mind to massacre the Roman senate, quit his country, and make himself a god in Alexandria, where, as they worshipt crocodiles, says Crevier, they might perhaps have worshipt him. But we proceed to the progress of science; for Jamblicus, in the second century, wrote his *Babylonica* so much praised, so famously abridged, and now so completely forgotten: and Galen, called to Rome upon an illness of the *young* Faustina, daughter to Titus, and lately married with his adopted heir, left it no more, till every effort had been vainly tried to detain the invaluable life of Antoninus Pius, whose purity of morals, integrity of heart, and spontaneous liberality, gave his subject world a constant and almost a perfect example of consummate virtue for twenty years together: the greatest stretch of it was, perhaps, the adoption of Aurelius, in compliance to the will of the deceased Adrian, and the desired benefit of all mankind; in opposition to parental feeling, and the warm wish, which he forbore to gratify, of making the purple hereditary, by leaving it his own two sons. It was by *their* hands, however, that the dying Emperor sent the

* Charmion means dove, and Iras is Iris still.

little golden image of good fortune to his beloved Faustina and her husband ; commending it *to their* bed's head, as it had always stood up at his own. The new Cæsar hastened to receive his sovereign's last command, and took upon himself to soothe those justly afflicted multitudes who lamented the death of their common parent and benefactor, with piercing shrieks along the streets of Rome.

Historians have observed how the different characters or modifications of excellence prevailed in the first kings of that amazing nation, and how the opposition visible in the manners of Romulus and Numa, of Tullus Hostilius, and Ancus Martius, promoted sensibly the general good, and matured the state's prosperity. A like variety, for spring and autumn have a strong resemblance ; may be said to present itself to readers who contemplate the dispositions of gentle Nerva, and of warlike Trajan ; the steady and domestic habits of frugality practised by grave and pious Antonine, who never slept but two nights from his palace ; and the high-polished elegance of travelled Adrian, whose voyages and remarks would of themselves create a useful volume ; but it is less difficult to discriminate the virtues of the good emperors, than it is to separate the vices of the bad ones. These last are really so much alike, I never know which reign I have been reading, except by some trait more of the author than the man described. A modern writer says the reason is this, " Virtue has proportions, but vice has none." When in his *Paul et Virginie*, the old man teaches a young solitary what passes in social life ; the boy is at no loss while they are speaking of good people, but soon as he begins upon the wicked ones, what could they mean by acting so ? says Paul ; I do not understand you. Our *retrospective* eye may now repose on the great successor of these great princes, who uniting every quality that can adorn a throne, with every virtue that exalts humanity, has left the reign of Aurelius a finished model for all future monarchs. Such were the barriers lent by heaven awhile, to stop the progress of decay ; yet all they did, and all they suffered to support an empire, already grown unwieldy

unwieldy with age, and tottering under the weight of ills brought on by a too rapid influx of wealth, and a too wide dilatation of power, evinces that they lived in ancient Rome's autumnal day, when full repletion sinks into satiety, and the broad sun, though rich and radiant, sets at an early hour, leaving the sad horizon black with thick gathering clouds, that seem to presage a rough and stormy night. How, indeed, could it be otherwise, when pleasure was so completely considered as the sole business of the Senate's care; that when Aurelius went out to war, he said to them, I go to relieve Rome from all solicitude; attend to your amusements, frequent your circus, let all anxiety be mine alone; think you of self gratification only. His colleague, Lucius Verus, was indeed willing to push such permission as far as it would go; for having thought it indispensable to associate *him* because Adrian had chosen his father for a successor, and had recommended the boy to Pius and himself; the present Emperor found much embarrassment from a companion, whose manners were in every way a contrast to his own. Many schemes of public benefit being frustrated by one, who, with equal power, used it so perversely, poisoning by his pernicious example the conduct of those whom his virtuous partner was studious to reform; among the rest Lucilla, daughter to our philosophic Marcus, but disposed to resemble her husband, not her father, who had vainly hoped that marriage might perhaps reclaim them both, and tame a silly spirit of frolic gaiety, which overleapt all bounds of duty and decorum. Thus was renowned Aurelius, an example of *his* assertion, who so seldom erred in knowledge of life, or precepts of morality,* when he tells us that "as it is always less difficult to do evil than good; although the wisdom or virtue of an individual can very rarely make many happy, yet may the folly or wickedness of a single mind serve easily to make all around him wretched." Whilst, therefore, one sovereign meritoriously fought only to exhibit in his own conduct a pattern for posterity to follow,

* Dr. Johnson.

though ever at an immeasurable distance; and the other as incessantly displayed mischievous pranks, of easier imitation and stronger allurements; the wiser part of the world saw its approaching change. Cities sprung up in regions remote from common observation, and *Frankfort* upon the Oder, was the work of Gauls; who wished to perpetuate in that town's appellation, the memory of their favourite general, Francus, so called because he *freed* them from Augustus Cæsar's yoke, who permitted the family to take on them a name, by which they are now but too well known, over the four continents; and Turks seem even yet to fancy all Christians originally sprung from *France*. 'Till the time of Octavius, part of what we now call so, seems to have been denominated Sicambria, from *Cambria*, wife of Antenor, son to the first Marcomir. Her name was probably Gomaria, Gomrah, Camrah, Cambria, from the great fountain of Teutonic families. Some of the French yet retain words from the Welch, or *Cambrian* language. The inhabitants of Bas Bretagne understand a native of Anglesea or Caernarvonshire, at the hour I am writing, and comprehend us when we say *ycymrodorion*, in English, *countrymen*; or rather *gomerodorion*, meaning brothers, descended from one stock *Gomer*. Brandenburg likewise before this time had reared his gloomy front, and Brando, their chief, set up that strange thing in the street which stood there safe towards fifteen years ago; of black basalt it seemed, its size colossal; I could get no one to tell me what it meant. The Germans had no cities in Tacitus's time, but Marpurg now called itself capital of the Cattians; and *Castellum* has yet scarce sunk in the word Cassel, its ancient appellation. Horrid concussions too shook the wide empire on its eastern side, and a portentous inundation of old Tyber frightening the metropolis, left behind it a dangerous contagion. But Lucius Verus at length falling a sacrifice to his own mad excesses, left his colleague unfettered and active to provide for all. Descended from Numa, he like him delighted in all the tranquil and domestic virtues; son by adoption to Antoninus Pius, he desired like him the civic crown rather

ther than the laurel ; but the late Emperor's pacific temper produced some consequent vexations to Aurelius. Nor squeezed for tribute by the hand of power, nor crushed and trodden by the foot of despotism ; the barbarous nations grew more insolent : while a revolt in Britain, and a still more formidable rebellion against the Emperor in Parthia, forced out those talents for military glory which had till then, by his own wish, remained unknown. *They* succeeded however, and *he* returned in triumph to his capital : where the fine statue of him still remained in the year 1786, sublime in princely beauty ; displaying still that dignity of character which language labours vainly to express, and setting before us the majestic warrior, of whom those who have only read his acts in story, form a too faint idea. And now believing that one of his most signal victories had been won by the vast efforts of his Christian regiment, called on that great occasion Legio Fulminatrix, he listened the more willingly to Melito's apology, and seemed disposed rather to encourage than oppress a faith he could not prevail upon himself to embrace. The cruelties exercised on Polycarp, however, were truly dreadful, and his endurance of them preternaturally, perhaps, heroic. When urged to renounce our Saviour, these 86 years (said he) do I serve him ; and I pray you bind me not to the stake, for what you have power to inflict, that will he give me strength to bear. Away with the impious ! exclaimed the proud Proconsul ; away with the impious ! replied the half-consumed Christian from his flames ; and if great Aurelius, when he heard the tale, was moved to pity such behaviour, and to say that no more of that sect should be punished for their opinions—Jortin need not have wondered so, or tried to teach the Emperor four words, in which he might have comprised with neatness the intent of his decree.* Marcus Aurelius must have understood Latin as well as Dr.

* *Nolumus Christianos amplius vexari*, are the words of our Doctor's prescriptive Latin. Marcus Aurelius seems fated to occasion offence to modern pedantry. It was the sport of the French wits to plague Monsieur and Madame Dacier, by saying, Ay, ay, your Marcus Aurelius was a fine man ; but by whose order was it that the saints were martyred at Lyons ?—to see the comical rage into which they both would fly, particularly the lady.—Vide all the French *Anas*.

Jortin, we'll suppose, but retaliation *was the way* in those days ; and when the prince permitted resistance, he knew his own people would torment them no more. He therefore wrote, to assure his too zealous governours, that if they persisted in disturbing innocent men concerning crimes themselves scarcely pretended to understand, their bodies should be condemned to bear the pains that their severity should insist on. New wars and new commotions meantime calling him out once more to defend the limits of an empire, exposed to hourly encroachments, and grieving his good spirit with the thoughts of obligation to lay on fresh taxes, he disposed of the imperial jewels for the payment of his troops, having reduced his own establishment even to a primitive simplicity—'spite of the Empress's extravagant desires, which, though supposed by all to have brought false heirs to his crown and dignity, he suffered not to disturb the public welfare. As daughter to Titus he deified her when she died ; nor would suffer any one's information to cause a word between them during the life of her, through whom he became the son of Antoninus Pius. Her genius for expence required his tightest curb, and something from the civil list was still reserved too for the reward of useful talents ; witness Polyenus, the Macedonian, who for eight books, containing an account of nine thousand stratagems employed in the art of war, received a royal present. Casaubon bought the Greek copies many ages after, and I myself saw them advertised in English not seven years ago.

Such was the uniform excellence of this sovereign, that the commonwealth seemed revived under his administration ; which always left the senate (as of old) to determine without appeal, and certain of their preference in all matters of moment, he chose rather to guide their councils by influence of his superior intellect, than to rule their determinations by dint of acknowledged authority. In return for such admirable, such exemplary conduct, the Fathers decreed him an enemy to the state, whose house should be found without a picture or statue
of

of their divine Marcus Aurelius; and it was *then* first settled to a common proverb—

Libertas nunquam clarior extat quam sub rege pio.*

Speed says that a Christian king at this time ruled in Britain; but Speed is hasty in his firm assertion, for Lucius, whom he speaks of, the Emperor's colleague, had long been dead, and never was baptized. Yet that there was a king Lucius many old ballads attest, and he, perhaps, hearing of the miracle shewn before two armies in favour of our faith, might possibly desire and receive baptism. Pope Eleutherius is said, at his request, to have sent over missionaries here, who, some think, founded our first bishop's sees, where the Arch-Flamens before them resided; at London, metropolis of Britannia prima; at York, the capital of Maxima Cæsariensis, and at Caerleon-upon-Ufke, in Wales, chief city of Britannia secunda. Papal command near the same time prohibited the superstitious refusal of any thing that was man's meat, and a church was built in Cornhill dedicated to St. Peter. Meanwhile Rome's bravest General, yet unfatigued, pursued his conquests over the barbarians, which, like hydra's heads, rose in still greater numbers to his sword; and having left a set of political lectures behind him with the senate, for whose use they were composed, and who, when listening to his last directions, interrupted them only by tears of anxiety or acclamations of rapture—he quitted Italy and returned to it no more; catching a scarlet fever from some prisoners in Pannonia, where the physicians, see'd by Commodus, took care he never should recover. Suffering, however, no dangers to controul his truly intrepid spirit, no sorrows to awaken his stoical tranquillity, internal peace contemning outward ills, beamed on his serene majestic countenance, till this fresh proof of his young successor's depravity; *then* the son's crime forced

* An adage Claudian consigned to poetical remembrance, by adaptation, many ages after.—*Nunquam libertas gratior exstat quam sub rege pio.*

from the dying patriot a groan of anguish—To what a guide, said he, I leave the world! and died. When Phœbus could but with difficulty poise the feat indeed, well might light Phaeton fall headlong from the car. The Roman power shewed evident symptoms of incipient decay: corruption could no longer be restrained, whilst opulence flowed in with every tide, and vice as certainly sapped the now-softened foundations of a structure, battered by invaders from undiscovered regions, and barbarous multitudes who fought but to devour and destroy. Commodus cared little for their acts or their intentions. Herodian describes, with great spirit, the boyish haste he made to get to Rome, where his uncommon beauty secured him admiration. Effeminate and gay, he soon dismissed his father's musty counsellors; furnished his imperial house with six hundred human creatures devoted to his pleasure; powdered his own fine auburn hair with gold dust, to encrease its brilliancy; spent on his toilet, in ten weeks, more than his predecessor's whole establishment had cost the public in the last ten years; and took arms in his white hand only to kill wild beasts withal—a diversion that displayed his elegance of mien and accuracy of eye, and in which he was eminently skilful, cutting off the necks of ostriches as they ran swiftly round the arena, with arrows curiously constructed and headed with a half-moon. It seems as if tyranny and archery had some unaccountable connection: not only this Emperor but Domitian was surprizingly certain of his aim; and it had been his sport to make a child stand with his little fingers stretched open against a wall, and then stick a dart between every two of them, shot from prodigious distance. The story of William Tell preserves the memory of our last renowned Toxopholite and tyrant of modern times: there was an intermediate tale of the same kind told somewhere about the tenth century; and our ballads celebrate *their* William of Cloudefelie for the same act of heroic skill. Truth is, historians serve the dish up again and again, and one fact gains belief in very separate ages. Philip of Macedon pushed away a woman who was troublesome to him with some petition,

tion, as he journeyed along: Be not our king then, if you will not hear us, replied the woman: the monarch then granted her request.

Augustan History relates this of Adrian, and it was told me for a truth, at Vienna, of Joseph II. Query, Was it ever true at all? One thing is sure, however, that the church of Christ gained firmness under the reign of this light-hearted profligate, whose best praise is, that he first instituted a company of corn merchants for the prevention of famine at Rome, where a medal, still extant, was struck on the occasion; Africa presenting the Emperor with ears of wheat, and a Greek inscription, that all were happy under the reign of Commodus; who, among his numerous new titles, took the name of Fælix, and says he would renew the golden age. This sovereign erred less through malice than mere wantonness; and when he slit an old senator's ear, under pretence of having his hair cut fashionably, we must needs know that half Eton school would play the same trick, were they, like *this* boy, invested with illimitable power. Making Aurelius's worthy old præfect dance naked among his young concubines, and letting them hoot and ridicule, and at length throw him in the mote to feed tame lampreys, was *a little worse*.—That poor fellow found his *no* golden age. Oppian the poet, in these times, projected his well-known poem on the Chace, as likely to recommend him to Commodus's favour, who was so successful in the destruction of wild beasts; he afterwards dedicated it to Caracalla, the dreadful hunter, whose chief game was man; while Julius Pollux composed his Onomasticon, of which Pinelli possessed a fine edition, A. D. 1786; and some Slavonian tribes laid the first stones of Utrecht. Nor were the schools of religion or learning discouraged, though whim, and gaiety, and silly pranks were all the Emperor thought of. In order to support such profuseness, all places of trust were set to sale, and treasures quite inconceivable were lavished upon the Prince's dissolute companions; among whom all his sisters were comprized, except Lucilla, widow of Lucius Verus: *her* husband, a Roman senator of ancient mould, and friend
to

to philosophic Marcus, refused her company to Commodus's command; the next day, of course, saw him and his wife expire upon a scaffold.

Lightning now struck the capitol at Rome, and the great library collected by Adrian, of immense value, was burned to the ground. Two thousand people died in one circle of twenty-four hours, from a new pestilence, caused by the heat and crowd in this thick-thronged metropolis. Plagues raged at home, and famines wasted the *limits* of the empire; whilst the young sovereign, intent on a new frolic, purposed to fence naked in the amphitheatre, and there exhibit his symmetric form to forty thousand admirers at once. This shameless project, this unheard-of folly, revolted the delicacy of his most favoured *female*, Marcia; and prompted her to represent the meanness of such conduct, in terms her uncontradicted paramour was little likely to forgive. He wrote her name on the dead list immediately: but a fondled baby picking up the paper as he played about the apartments, and bringing it the lady by mere chance; she resolved to prevent her own death by her master's; and easily engaging his chamberlains' assistance, who saw themselves marked down with her for execution—threw her zone round his undefended neck while bathing, and, helped by two assassins, soon destroyed a prince who, had he met with any other death, had scarce deserved compassion. Commodus seems to have approached modern exuberance more than any other sovereign we have mentioned yet; he had a genius for mechanic arts. Unlike Flavius Vespasian, to whom, when some one presented a machine for useful purposes, the Emperor saw him rewarded, and the mechanism burnt; for how, said he, must my subjects live by labour, if all their work is to be done by engines? On the contrary, *this* youth, elaborately voluptuous, gave immense sums to the inventors of umbrella chariots, which, I believe, had springs to them besides. When Pertinax afterwards made a sale of his effects, the people, lost as they were to virtue (say historians), were ashamed to buy. Thus in this heedless, though flagitious reign,

reign, more evil of every sort had been diffeminated, that the past five-score years of excellence could counteract: nor were his successors, ephemeron monarchs, likely to support the dignity of that dominion which dropt from the hands of five or six pretenders in course of only eight months. Though this much must be said for Pertinax, that he had been a senator, a præfect, and a commissary; had taught language in the schools, and carried colours in the field; had suffered hardships without complaint, and acquired rank without meanness of solicitation; yet, though a man of incomparable understanding, styled by his intimates the tennis-ball of fortune, and earnest to shew she had at length been just; his name would never have descended to posterity, had he not worn the purple eighty-six days, and seen it torn from him on the eighty-seventh, with life, which he valued less—for no fault he had committed, or was even suspected of. Mean Didius, who had bought the seat of rule with money, parted from it, as might be expected, with more reluctance, like a miser from his hoard; which Niger arrived not at possessing, till after the British and eastern generals had for a while disputed the dangerous pre-eminence. Accident, concurring with the spirit of riot and impetuosity that now determined every great event, placed Septimus Severus on the throne. The reins of government were held with difficulty even by this active and vigilant commander, *Verè Pertinax, Verè Severus*, as he was called; who saw astonished, new tokens of rebellion mark various parts of the tumultuous world; and had the affliction to use, in his own camp, coins with effigies of Donald, king in Scotland. Harassed on every side by a variety of opponents, who, though often conquered to outward appearance, were never—*never* again completely subdued in reality; and, more attentive to retain the sovereignty for himself and his two sons, than to support the authority of the parent country over nations rising in resistance every hour; the gout seized and confined him to a painful bed at York, when some flatterer expressing surprise that he could rule so vast an extent of dominion, being so lame, sick,

and unwieldy—I manage the empire, said Severus, with my head, and, tender as they be, I will yet strive to keep it down with my feet. The gout however laying hold upon a vital part, he died here in the north of England, where he had long kept a sort of court, in order to be near at hand in case of any disturbance from the Gauls: and though an indefatigable general, eminent for the necessary virtues of soldier-like courage and manly fortitude, he felt in death the imperial power crumbling from his throne, a seat more highly raised than deeply fixed in his day; not as it stood in time of Augustus Cæsar, to all appearance rooted in a firm and seemingly immovable stability. Two hundred years about this time elapsing since our religion first was founded, the *retrospective* eye rests for a moment upon St. Irenæus's martyrdom, and will observe Origen, surnamed Adamantius, adding new lustre to his great profession, while the warm eloquence of bold Tertullian* enforced those truths which neither heresy could choke, nor persecution kill; though controversy raged between the eastern and the western church with a degree of violence incredible. One may observe, indeed, that early discussions in faith or politics add energy and strength both to the church and state. When both are founded safely howsoever, he is the greatest blockhead who disturbs them, and tries to raise a dangerous fermentation; but when decay begins to *taint*, or atrophy to *numb* their constitution, talking their merits and their faults again over, revives a latent spark once more perhaps, and animates them to a longer continuance.

* Of Tertullian's eloquence, suffice the fine allusion to Christ's miracle, when sleeping in the little ship tossed with storms—he waked, rebuked the winds, and there was a great calm. So, says the orator, 'tis with our Christian Church, beaten by persecution's roughest waves. Let but our Redeemer arise and speak the word, all shall at once be still. The affinity this has to Horace's ode, "Oh navis refert in mare, &c." is surely no discredit to the passage; yet says Balzac, "On appelle obscur ce génie énorme; il faut pourtant avouer que l'obscurité de Tertullien comme le noirceur de l'ébène jette un grand éclat." It is natural for Balzac to like Tertullian.

CHAP. III.

FROM CARACALLA TO THE DEATH OF ALEXANDER SEVERUS.

FIRST PORTION OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

WE still are chained to biographic anecdotes, few general facts occurring in these times on which to fix our *retrospective* glass, through which indeed the Goths are seen dividing on each side the Wefer, then Visurgis; and called *Eastphalians* and *Westphalians* for that cause—while the Jews closed the book they called the Talmud, and Christians openly and without fear celebrated the day the Saviour of our world was born. Of politics, as of an art, little can be predicated, while to the care of one mind only the great and general whole was seen committed. Mankind had hitherto been influenced to good or ill chiefly by the example set them by their rulers,* on whose immediate fiat all depended; nor did the best among them spend much time in making laws which the next sovereign's lips could on the instant abrogate or confirm. The *lex talionis* was their best standard of moral rectitude; and when Augustus, supping with a senator, had seen him enraged against a slave for breaking one of the glasses that they drank out of, he watched how far passion would lead the man, resolved to make him suffer the next day, and see how he should like retaliation. But when the poor slave was flung out of the window by his master's order, the Emperor chose not to go so far, but sent an officer early the

* Cassiodorus, two hundred and fifty years after *this* period, says,

Facilius errare naturam est, quam principem formare
Rempublicam dissimilem sibi.

next morning to break every glass in this senatorial house; a punishment that makes a modern reader laugh. Nor could Aurelius manage any better, although his must have really been a faultless character, could he have prevailed upon himself to have set worthless Commodus aside. But if he fell in the snare of fondness for his son, how must mankind agree in condemnation of mean, self-interested Severus' cares, when dying, he advised his boys to love each other, to revere his memory, to pay their soldiers well, and laugh at all the world besides. Such counsels sure almost deserved what followed; when the monster Caracalla, soon as his father died, pursued into the weeping widow's arms his brother Geta, whom he murdered there, forcing the affrighted parent not long after into an impious marriage with himself; and erasing every *alto rilievo* in Rome, erected to perpetuate remembrance of him who had shared the pleasures of his childhood. The *arca degl' orifici* remains even now a monument of this unnatural hatred, which the inhabitants of Alexandria, with more indignation than it was prudent to express, ventured to ridicule, and when the Emperor came there in progress, *Œdipus* and *Jocasta* was acted for his entertainment—a jest, said he, for which I will soon make their boasted river run red to the sea with blood. Nor was he backward to execute the apparently exaggerated menace: when the next night the theatre was opened, a band of soldiers watched the audience out, and murdered, without sparing age or sex, all who had seen the luckless representation. When it is reflected on, that these old theatres held from four to five thousand souls at once, we wonder not that such tyrannic measures soon taught the terrified subjects a new lesson; they hastened to take out the name of Geta from medals, coins, &c. nay even from the comedies of Terence, substituting quickly some other in its room; nor dared a private man, making his will, bequeath a legacy to one who bore it. Yet could not Caracalla, though temperate in his diet, and delighting in rough exercise, drive from his anxious mind the horrors of a wild distempered fancy: the figure of his father still pursued

fued

fued him, and ftill the figure cried, *Omnia fui, nihil expedit*. Now, of his brother's partizans and friends fell twenty thoufand in one night at Rome: all who had ever ferved him as domestics, all houfes where he ever vifited, were marked; yet, fpite of all that murder, all that mafacre, fome courage and fome virtue yet remained. The ftotic advocate Papinian, commanded to plead in public, and affert the neceffity of Geta's death, refufed to do fo—offering his head to the executioner, who cut it infantly away, after having heard him obferve only, that it was eafier for an emperor to commit fratricide than for profefors of the law to juftify it. Helvetius Pertinax too, fon of the momentary monarch, hearing how the name of Parthicus had been decreed to Caracalla, for fome advantages gained by grofs treachery over Artabanes, faid, that he thought the appellation *Geticus* might not be much amifs (there were a barbarous people called the *Getæ*), and for that witticifm he was content to lofe his life. And now his favourite female was no more, who partly had reftained this rage for blood; the lumbering dead-cart, as in days of peftilence, knocked nightly at fome fenatorial gate, demanding victims to his fell revenge; who, after burning Aristotle's books, and putting down all fchools throughout the empire; after having long deferved and fecretly received the title oppofite to that of Titus, accufed of all mankind; was at laft affaffinated by command of Macrinus the provoft, who fucceeded him, and reigned a year and half. He was lamented by his foldiers however, who loved a hard hand and a generous purfe, and defpifed effeminacy more than they feared inexorable ftictnefs. The phyficians no doubt thought his death *their* releafe: when teased by ficknefs upon fome occafion he had ordered three of them for execution, becaufe, he faid, they did not cure him fooner, who never retarded the fuccefs of medicine by habits of intemperance; his paffion for the memory of Alexander was fupposed to have infpired him with fome of thefe freaks. A man at Rome pleaded a caufe of property before him: Who are you? faid the Emperor.—A Macedonian, Cæfar.—And your father's name?—Philip.

Philip. He raised that fellow to the rank of prætor, and gave his competitor's fortunes into his hand. The son, says he, of Philip of Macedon, shall never acknowledge a conqueror. In these days the village of Emmaus, celebrated in sacred writ from our Saviour's appearing there after his resurrection, was made into a city by the Emperor's command, and called Nicopolis, in honour of a victory over the barbarians: that name remains to it still. Of this unrelenting Prince it is observed, that all his busts and statues have a mean character. Though not deformed, he was particularly ugly; and when Italians employed to shew foreigners the curiosities of Rome, clap a round English hat upon his head, as they delight exceedingly to do, he looks like Tom Nero in Hogarth's prints, called the Four Stages of Cruelty. Meanwhile it signified every day less and less *who* was created emperor. Severus was an African, Macrinus was a Moor; and since the noblest Roman had taken on himself the character of gladiator, the gladiators might, with not much less propriety, aspire to the first offices of the state. When high-born Commodus publicly took his title of Secutor, and fought to engage the Retiarius on a common stage, reminding men of his mother's passion for a prize-fighter, perpetuated by still existing statues of Faustina and her lover, with the insignia of Mars and Venus; disgracing the purple was no more a term, and it was of smaller consequence who wore it. Sciences too seemed to have past their acme; and as the people grew slavish they grew dull. Critics accuse their best historians of growing prolix and languid; and though Dion does certainly describe the dreadful eruption of Mount Vesuvius with much spirit, having himself heard, even to Capua, the hollow presaging roar, by which was followed an almost unexampled burst from the mountain; we find convulsions of the state told tamely, either spun out in tedious cold narration, or broken into points equally ill-placed, by a puerile desire of becoming brilliant, which are as often blunted too by native insipidity. The fifth edition of the Bible, commonly called the Vulgate, I believe, was about this time found near to Jericho,

Jericho, hid in an empty wine cask : church-yards were consecrated for Christian burying-places ; Zephyrinus, a Roman Pope, made the communion chalice *glass*, which had till then been wood, and his successor, Calixtus, ordered ember days to prepare clergy before their ordination. He forbade marriage to the fourth degree. These anecdotes we have from Platina and others, but that Caracalla was the man mentioned in Ossian's poems, as *Caracul*, son to the King of the world, merits, as the phrase is, confirmation.

It is certain that the old records of our modern nations are enveloped in mist, like the grey dawn when it rises slow and sad from behind the mountains of Morna ; when, feeble and blind, the bard listens to the wind as it drives on a low-hung cloud, and voices are heard above. Dark among wintry storms, and difficult to understand are the tales of other times, while the echoing stream of Duvranno seeks the black-rolling sea, leaving no trace of the poet's pride. Macpherson is gone, and Johnson went before him ; and to ascertain the authenticity of Fingal, men of less genius than they were, must be left. If Scotland did *then* produce heroes and bards, it is strange that we should read of them as cannibals in Camden or Ammianus Marcellinus, two hundred years after Caracul is mentioned : but different districts might have different manners, and barbarism *might* return again whence it had once been driven. It is strange too, that the Caledonians should call this Emperor by a *soubriquet*, when Bassianus was his real name, and Antonine his assumed one. *That* appellation now went forward as the name Augustus had done before, expressing the greatest honour a subject world could confer upon its prince. The silky Syrian of Emesa, indeed, who, when Macrinus dashed himself headlong from his car in desperation, for the death of his only son, mounted the seat of power at thirteen years of age, despised all nominal distinctions, except that of his own god Elagabalus Thammuz I believe ; or Adonis, whose absence was wept by women, with a thousand strange polluted mysteries shewn in vision to Ezekiel. The scholiast upon Pindar says, that the sun was of old called a stone, and Anaxagoras

goras of Clazomenæ had prophesied, that a stone should fall from the sun; *betros* or *petros* was shown as the very stone; perhaps by analogy or by corruption, *petra* at length was name for any stone: there was a prohibition given the early proselytes to Christianity no more—*ad petras vota reddere*: be this as it may, Rome saw astonished her new sovereign bring his new deity, a great unformed stone, with triumph to their ancient capitol—backing the six milk white steeds that drew it in, for purpose of shewing the idol more respect. The people gazed, yet could not chuse but grieve to see the tutelar divinities of Rome neglected, while hecatombs were weekly offered to this eastern intruder, by a weak, vicious boy, dissolved in vice, who practised debaucheries of every sense, in every possible, every impossible mode, till folly failed, and slavery could supply no more. They would have sooner shewn their aversion to Elagabalus the priest, had they not feared to offend the god he brought with him: they recollected how the famous Cybele was fetched from Pessinus, during the second punic war, and supposed to bring happiness in her train; though, on arrival, she, like this new comer, was found to be only a large conical stone, called of the place she came from, Pessinuntia. Such was the image that *fell down* from Jupiter, the great Diana of the Ephesians—effect of a volcanic explosion probably, ill understood, and carried in the atmosphere to some spot where ignorance regarded it as an object of superstition. Shapeless stones had been set up for worship in several places, and called *Betylia*, probably from those the patriarch Jacob slept upon when on his journey to Syria. The event happening at *Bethel* confirms the idea by its etymology, and it was in all times a Syrian object of adoration. The Syrians of Emesa were Surians, *Surus* was the Sun, *Dea Suria* was *Dea Solaris*. This divinity ripened their gums, fruits, and spices; and its absence was mourned of course, though not of long continuance;* it was sometimes god, sometimes goddess, but *Adonis* was

* I thought it strange the Syrians *should* lament a loss so soon repaired: and Monsieur Bailly (as Sir William Jones tells us) said the same thing. Jones laughs at,
Bailly

the person chiefly alluded to, favourite of *Venus*, and Heliogabalus we must acknowledge a proper priest for *him*, who instituted a senate-house for female debates, and entertained troops of bacchante girls and empty parasites, with feasts which cost sixty thousand guineas of our money each, for many nights together, making a hair-dresser head of the privy council, a dancing-boy præfect of the city, and at length, forming a procession through the degraded streets, drawn by four women, the most beautiful that could be found, in honour of an idol to which he sacrificed rarities of quite inordinate expence, while he himself and his immediate favourites were diverted by weighing the cobwebs of the capital, in order to judge the better of its population: Many of his tricks and whimsies are recorded—the dinner set for eight blind men, eight deaf, and eight so fat they could not sit at table, was given in the true spirit of licentious childhood, laughing at human infirmity; and possibly it might have been from his caprice of suffocating people with perfumes for sport, that modern ladies in Italy have such a dread of scented powder, and every kind of vegetable fragrance. Till his time sweets were fashionable in Rome; Otho had so flung perfumes about the chamber, when Nero dined with him, as to endanger his own safety from the tyrant who had esteemed himself happy in procuring a small phial of this inestimable odour, perhaps the now well-known otto of roses, extracted from those flowers in the east even then. The eating rooms, we know, were strewn with lilies, a very powerful and overbearing smell, and they sat with garlands of flowers on their heads at supper, throwing them into the bowl of wine for frolic and convivial merriment.

Those luxuries were driven down into fatuity by the weak head of

Bailly for fancying they worshipped fire most fervently in *cold* countries; he says, Calcutta is cold enough in some months; and that the tradition of a warrior bard, named Antarah, expiring upon a high mountain in Arabia, for want of warmth to drive the blood along, proves they had cause enough for lamentation, when Thammuz, or the sun, kept out of sight.

childish Heliogabalus, who, whilst his cooks invented a new sauce, more to the taste of the mad girls, his gay companions, forced them to live on that they sent up last, and saw that the command was obeyed even to rigour. Till tired; at length, with repeating tales true and false, concerning the marriage of this painted minion, who certainly did at the altar wed in a female dress his own he-slave, one Hierocles, who was called publicly the Empress's husband, by whom they said he was contented to be beaten too, that the wife's character might be completely acted; they massacred the effeminate voluptuary one day, under whose horse's feet they had strewn silver dust some weeks before, that he might tread more softly. With him his mother Soemis was killed, who held her darling clasped in her faithful arms, when the indignant soldiery, enraged at hearing he designed to take his cousin's life, young Alexander; set *him* upon the throne, and finished the fanatic revels of despicable superstition, by tying the silly priest and deity together, and throwing them into Tyber, where the black stone sunk the fair youth at once; leaving their common name to swim along the stream of time, with that of Sardanapalus their countryman, who died nine hundred or a thousand years before. Helvicus, the great theological professor, says, that the Targum of Jerusalem was compiled about this time; but Scaliger sets it earlier, and I suppose his is the least controvertible authority; he tells us, the Targumists *might* have seen Jesus Christ—if so, we are a century too forward here. The Targum was a collection of Chaldee paraphrases on the Old Testament, of which Fourmont has given a very curious extract; but *Retrospection* cannot turn aside, where learning calls, though loudly; our little book must gather common occurrences as it rushes on, and straws will stick sometimes instead of pearls. Meanwhile Baden was built in Germany, either by Septimius Severus, father to Caracalla, who had received benefit from the warm bathing there; or else by Alexander, kinsman, countryman, and successor to Elagabalus. These Syrian princes attracted the notice of a Roman
camp

camp fixed at Emesa; and as they were nephews to Julia Domna, mother of murdered Geta, were deemed worthy of the imperial purple, which seldom descended on in the same family for any length of time. The emperors had seldom sons to live, or if they had, some accident almost perpetually intervened, that caused succession still to change its course, and this votary of soft Adonis was now no more. Those then who are skilled in the strange mechanism of the human mind, and tell us that every man, popularly speaking, would rather be called rogue than fool, may, from the horrible portraits preserved in this last chapter, deduce an observation not unlike it. 'Tis that the world seems to have felt more offence at having been, though but awhile, made miserably subservient to the gross appetites of brutal Vitellius, the wild caprice of mad Caligula, or the depraved wantonness of a wicked boy, their last contemptible ruler, than they appeared to feel under the iron sceptre of timid and inhuman Domitian; or when the stoutest heart palpitated with apprehension under the sanguinary reign of Caracalla, who, after his death, was quietly enrolled among the gods, whilst his young successor was tost into the river, as loathsome Vitellius had been long before. Like him too was he followed by an exemplary prince, whose purity of manners needed no contrast to set off its whiteness; on this luminous spot the eye of *Retrospection* rests delighted, and sees at length a worthy character gracing the seat where fate the half celestial Antonines; but Alexander Severus modestly declined a name no mortal should he said presume to accept, but who had first deserved it. The earliest step taken by him for that good purpose, was to separate the male and female bathers—a measure set on foot by Domitian, and perfected, in spite of resistance from the scoffers, by Adrian's desire of polishing his people. Till time of Elagabalus they had been kept apart; and his time was but short. All his extravagance, and all his folly, was compressed within the space of three years and ten months at most, from his ridiculous entry into the city with his idol, to the blest day, when the

Prætorian bands rescued his virtuous cousin from fears of execution, and invested *him* with the supreme command. His next care was to throw down the indecent statues set up by his lascivious predecessor, particularly one of exquisite workmanship and colossal size, representing Volupia trampling Virtue under feet. An old Greek Jupiter and Leda was preserved, because of its uncommon excellence and smaller size; 'twas taken care of once again when Attila sacked Rome, and carried to Venice, where the tale was told me. An hospital was now set up, the first upon record, like our Asylum, meant to preserve the children of poor people from any necessity of their prostitution. Mammæa the queen mother, was made president—happy if her son's pious gentleness had carried filial consideration no further, than to have furnished her with means of doing good: but to her avarice he yielded somewhat, and to her ambition sacrificed himself, repudiating at her command the lady he proposed to marry, and never taking to himself another wife, for fear of giving her a moment of uneasiness. Women bore immoderate sway in Syria, where to refuse the sex regard, was considered as an offence to heaven. Mæsa and Soemis had been admitted to councils of state in the preceding reign, and that Mammæa might be stopt from requiring public honours, the Emperor loaded her with private emoluments; while serious study or elegant arts divided the days and nights of this praiseworthy Prince, who sought, as it should seem, to rescue human nature from the disgraces brought upon it by his cousin. His talents seconded his application, and he was eminently skilful in painting, sculpture and architecture; yet, ever ready at the call of war, he faced revolting provinces with active valour, and by dint of a discipline worthy Fabius or Fabricius, his camp resembled a well-regulated city, till by reduction of Ctesiphon and other districts in the east, the Roman empire certainly resumed, with a false show of pristine virtue, a short but fallacious hope of spreading to its ancient limits. Imitating, though distantly, his admirable conduct, we see his generals, like himself, victorious: Celsus drove back the Mauritanians.

tanians in Afric, and Palmatus returned with conquest from Armenia ; but all except himself were weary of practising self-denial. The Romans had been temperate in old times, because they could not be luxurious ; but opulence like theirs is antidote to virtue, and it was to make their court alone, that individuals had, under the Antonines, preserved a show of it. Their ruler's steady rectitude sprung from a nobler source ; brave, chaste, and merciful, he set the best example to his subjects ; he stopt all persecution of the unoffending Christians, and though a polytheist by profession, kept a picture of our Saviour always in his closet, a crucifix at his bed's head ; but better far than all exterior reverence, he kept the divine precept, which he delighted to repeat, *Do ye to others as ye would have others do to you*, not only in his lips but in his heart ; not only in his heart, but in his actions. Upon this great, this governing principle, the youthful monarch was first to refuse the slavish homage practised to his predecessors, of kissing the imperial toe or slipper ; a custom, as he said, unworthy men, and Romans. He loved his people, and lamented only that the time was past in which he could have served them ; resolving however, that if they did wrong, he would at least do right : this amiable, this incomparable character, set his doors open both in camp and town, nor feared the censure of observing eyes upon a life so blameless. To him virtue proved, notwithstanding, no invulnerable shield. From the rough violence of insulting foldiers, Ulpian, the upright counsellor of his youth, vainly sought shelter for his venerable age under his master's robe, whither, pursued by cruelty inveterate, he at the last retired to die, pierced by a thousand wounds ; in vain wrapt round by the now, no longer sacred purple. When rank sedition next appeared abroad, encouraged by this ill-deserved success against an honest, rough, but useful minister, it was to attack the Emperor himself. He received the tumultuous, not unexpected roar, sitting on a temporary throne within his tent ; and for a moment the effect appeared to justify his conscious intrepidity. Citizens ! cried he, unworthy the name of soldiers : Citizens, I say, desist, and

and go back peaceably this moment. The Prætorian legion shouted : reserve your shouts, said Alexander undismayed, for victory over our common enemies ; me you may destroy, but never shall intimidate. Retire, I tell you : the impulse of a customary obedience conquered ; they did retire ; but, in that same night, under their favourite Maximin's command, returned to kill, by black assassination, the hero whom they dared not face, though undefended, when in the fight of open generous day. - Thus, by the hand of a vile Goth, whom he had raised for personal courage shewn in that German war, fell before the town of Mentz, which they were then besieging, the all-accomplished Syrian of Emesa. Like the palmetto, where his graceful shade, well sung by Thomson, hangs a high canopy betwixt the teeming earth and burning sun, this gallant leader showed his superiority only in acts of beneficence to Rome unknown before. Like that fine tree too, round his roots, and under the protection of his spreading boughs, grew up all poisonous, all baneful weeds, thwarting the ends of his so fair creation, and leaving him an ornament for futurity to admire, but hindering immediate use from his example.

CHAP. IV.

FROM THE DEATH OF ALEXANDER SEVERUS TO A. D. 300,
THE RETREAT OF DIOCLESIAN.

THE man who fell'd this cedar of Mount Lebanon; the spoiler before whose grasp faded this bright rose of Damascus; the gigantic Thracian who succeeded him, is called by all his historians an usurper, I guess not why. Where no hereditary succession is established, a man may seize the sovereignty by force, or procure it by artifice, or as Didius Julian did, purchase it with money; but it is not easy to see how he can usurp it. Maximin was made emperor by those licentious soldiers, who were become so radically corrupt, that tyranny alone could restrain them; for young Severus's exemplary virtue had only skinned and filmed the ulcerous place, which on his death broke out again directly. Not only members of the army were become vitiated by those immense donations which, since Aurelius, had been lavished on them by each new candidate for public favour; but every rank in Rome partook the infection. Females sought guilty methods to avoid being mothers, and men disgraced their own sex by effeminacy, till they became objects of just abhorrence to the other. Whilst the mornings of rich people, no longer spent in study or improvement, were consumed in riding up and down the streets, at risk of breaking their empty heads upon the pavement; not in the same manner as our London youths gallop along Bond-street or Piccadilly, dressed like their grooms, but with a long train of domestics after them, that scarce was the cook left at home to get dinner, says the satirical historian, or the buffoon to prepare new jokes for gracing of the feast. This
bright

bright example was soon followed by ladies, who hurried from house to house in open litters, with a deformed groupe of antique eunuchs round them, returning late to dress for the evening show, where public dancing was so prized by them, that when, for fear of famine, foreigners were ordered suddenly to quit the city, three thousand were detained by the nobility, as having parts to perform in a new ballet. The soldiers were no less disposed to gross voluptuousness. From a new sovereign they were in expectation of new largesses, and when handfuls of gold were to be thrown amongst them, he whose vast palm was most capacious best suited their idea of merit; but the *perfections that are placed in bones and nerves*, amaze the vulgar only, and amaze *them*, only for a moment. Two years and a half ended the reign of Maximin the wrestler, who fearful of nothing himself, sported a while with the terrors of mankind; and as he, waking, could have overthrown any seven men at once, and broken a horse's thigh by one stroke of his foot, the sly assassins stole upon him sleeping, and gave his body up to dogs and beasts of prey: while the Senate, justly ashamed of such a ruler, caused the two Gordians to be elected in his stead. Descended from the Gracchi by their father's side, the people willingly supported their pretensions, whilst every regiment in Roman pay, took pleasure to relate how the mother of old Gordian was granddaughter to immortal Trajan, a name still dear to all. Faction and fury, however, deprived the world of these commanders in less than forty days. The son fell in the field, covered with countless wounds; the father, seventy-six years old, I think, unwilling to see more sorrow, killed himself, leaving two others, equally impotent patricians, to dispute the prize of momentary power. Yet perilous, as we should at this distance, seeing but with *Retrospection's* eye, deem the sad state of those who stood, as it were, on tiptoe, with wild haste to watch into whose hands the imperial sway should fall: Pupienus and Balbinus were so earnest, each to retain the whole without participation, that both were massacred, in three weeks time, by the Prætorian bands, who,
viewing

viewing their mean quarrels with almost merited contempt, took up another Gordian upon their shoulders from college, where he was placed by the dead uncles to finish his education. About this time Buda began, but not under that name, to display her growing graces; they now adorn the fine hill which overlooks the Danube, in that most beautiful part of its course between Hungary and Turkey; while the inhabitants persist in saying Buda jugo, Venetæ pelago, Florentia campo; and travellers say they are right. 'Tis now called Offen, I believe, a sort of suburb 'tis to the great town, as Southwark to London, or Pera to Constantinople; and in these warm pools which there receive waste water from the warm baths, I'm informed that many sorts of fish live and grow fat, confirming Mr. Bruce's assertion which, when he published it first, revolted so many readers. Herodian here concludes his history, and Dion Cassius ends with his own consulship, after which he considered all as of slight importance: like Cicero, who eager to begin his own exploits, proposed writing his narration backward from the time in which they were performed. The Roman commonwealth indeed, and those of Greece, which I will call contemporary states; as Pericles and Coriolanus flourished the same year: like clumps strewed over an immense large park, break in some measure the tedious uniformity, and serve to attract our mental telescope to those particular though tiny spots, dropt as by accident upon the long flat prospect of single and out-stretched dominion, which formed one vast, one widely spreading plain round the sole monarch's palace, to whose care, whoever he might be, the whole of our terraqueous globe seems to have been consigned for the first four thousand five hundred years of its existence. Of these so thinly scattered clumps the boundaries were necessarily contracted, and the duration short: each from his fellow shrub draining that general moisture given to support one single timber tree, so that such groupes could neither much aspire, nor spread far.* A proof of their

* Lucumon was a Greek, he was son to Demaratus, king of Corinth, with whom having quarrelled, he left his own court in disgust, wandering away to Italy, where he was well received, and called Lucius Tarquinius; this was about the time when Josiah

contraction lives in our last sentence, that Coriolanus returned in triumph from his exile, threatening the gates of Rome, while *Pericles*, victorious in war, and promoting at polished Athens the arts of peace, never seems to have heard that such a man had being. Though grave philosophy had then attained perfection, tragedy trod the stage supported by her great master Sophocles; and theatres for musick, exhibitions for painting were erected in Greece, the patroness of science, and model for succeeding ages: soon! how soon! to become subservient to a nation then so barbarous, that although close to them they thought not of; while the fine statues Flora, Venus, and Apollo, were doomed to deck Italian palaces in future times, and witness the wondrous revolutions that took place in the next short, but eventful period—west of the Adriatick. Among these clustering plantations then it was the Roman republick lasted longest; but conquests daily extending *their* possessions, all was again concentrated under one sceptre's sway, of dignity inferior to those which had gone before it; but heavier far and harder of command. Thus Babylonish Nebuchadnezzar was the true *head of gold*; rich, brilliant, powerful beyond all the rest; but having offended Heaven with his pride, Cyrus the Great was called, and called by name, five hundred and forty years before his birth; when the almighty Spirit that spake by the prophets, predicted that *silver* empire which Alexander clad in *brazen* arms destroyed.* A rougher metal represents the Roman power, which hung her *iron* fetters on mankind; and towards the year 250 after Christ, the eye of *Retrospection* will be guided so as to discern a new authority closing like *potter's clay*, in manner most miraculous around the rusting steel. Stability had lately been bestowed upon our church by partial ten-

was king of Jerusalem—living very long, this Lucumon was surnamed *Priscus*, which means the old. He sent the sons of Ancus Martius out o' hunting, and procured himself to be elected king in their absence. He was husband of Tanaquil, and grandfather to Tarquin the Proud. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and all the old historians, tell the same tale.

* See Daniel, chap. ii. verse 31, to the end.

dernefs from young Severus, who, with his mother, favoured Christian doctrine, and granted immunities to fome of its professors. Urban the Pope then fixed the dignitaries, and wifely appointed that no man fhould be bifhop who had not firft been deacon. Some veffels belonging to *our* altars now were gilt, minifters were maintained, and registers of martyrdoms kept, out of the money fpent on the general ftock. That rapid fucceffion of fovereigns invefted with the purple, ftained by the blood of gentle Alexander, afforded indeed ample fcope for records of intolerable torture, practifed on martyrs that preffed for the appellation; and it was on this fixth perfecution, if I am right, that the beautiful virgin Cæcilia was fllaughtered. Whilft in more northern climes the Anglo-Italian Caraufius called himfelf emperor, and killed Aleëtus, though fome defer the exploits he did to Diocleſian's day. The medallifts are beft to fettle thefe difputes: they have preferved his effigies who, finding that maritime ftrenth was the true *vis Britannica*, built fhips, and befieged Boulogne-sur-Mer, the new-born daughter of our natural enemy: difgracing his heroifm with cruelty however, the Britons fet up Afclepiodotus againft him. *He* fet his forces down encamped near London, which was defended then by Livius Gallus, a Roman general, whom the new-made Duke of Cornwall killed, and threw into the running ftream, from him called Gallus' Brook or *Wallbrook*. Speed places this event in A. D. 228, but Ifaacfon, from Cooper, fets it earlier. Scotland, befide, was filled with ftange occurrences. Athirco, the prince, violated all laws of hofpitality, by forcibly carrying off with him, next day, the two daughters of Natholocus, a dependent noble, who had entertained one night the chieftain at his caſtle: but who, feeling no difpoſition to forgive the insult offered to his houſe, rebelled immediately; and having driven his antagoniſt to ſuicide, feized on the power himſelf; and killed ſo many of thoſe Thanes that adhered to Athirco, that a furious war was kindled againft *him*. When eager to know what chance he had for ſucceſs, he diſpatched a truſty, and,

as he thought no doubt, a *faithful* messenger, into the Hebrides, for the purpose of learning his future destiny from a witch or *angekok* residing there, who sold favourable winds and told fortunes. Her answer to the man who came for consultation, was simply this—'Tis *you* will kill Natholocus. The messenger, who had not such a thought before, *now* entertained it; and fearing to relate the dangerous prediction, resolved rather to accomplish it, preventing his master's anger by his death—whilst Ostrogotha, another tributary of the Romans, drove all the Gepidæ before him on the continent, chased many Vandals from their ancient seats, and so increased his wide and wild domain, soon to be called after his name their founder; that all the northern districts of the empire felt justly fearful of these gathering storms. Nor was the east more quiet: Agathias, whose Persian history serves as a supplement to the works of Procopius, tells us the acts of Sapor, and his battles oft repeated with young Gordian, a virtuous, literary, and martial character, who solemnly opened the temple of Janus, and wedding the daughter of his preceptor Misitheus, conducted himself with wisdom and propriety, till an Arabian chief, skilled in the poisoning arts, drugged the unhappy tutor's posset; little doubting but that a boy of those years, let alone, would soon commit some juvenile excesses, that might be urged to countenance rebellion. Gordian however did not disgrace his family, all three who bore the name were scholars and soldiers, magnificent in peace, and eminently fearless in war. So that Philip the Arab was constrained to excite the guards by donatives, to murder a young man who deserved better fate; and coming to the throne on his decease, kept it a while against various pretenders set in opposition by the senate, who saw with no delight a Christian prince invested with royal robes, and placed in the first situation of the state. Eusebius says, the infant church even then displayed her power, denying entrance to their proselyte, though they existed but by his protection, till he had made a public penance for his sins. As Scaliger however doubts this fact, we must wait other evidence.

evidence. Truth is, the captain of a band of robbers, whose name denotes merely *the lover of a horse*, did small credit to any faith, and might possibly have been mistaken for a professor of ours, if, having been born an Ishmaelite, he had retained some traditionary belief in the Old Testament—for Pagans were perpetually confounding our Christian creed with the Mosaic dispensation. I guess not indeed, what could have deceived Eusebius. His celebration of the secular plays, when in the general gaiety and riot Pompey's fine theatre was burned to ground, prove him no very scrupulous believer; since at those games (when the grave herald's voice called the whole town together, crying, Come see the sports which no man now alive ever *did* or ever *shall* see more) the Emperor himself acted as *pontiff*, sprinkling the victim's head with salt and wine—a ceremony no Christian convert would have submitted to, as for the non-performance of similar rites numberless men were martyr'd every day. At these particular plays, exhibited once every hundred years, *sæpe facias!* answering to the oriental compliment of *O King, live for ever!* was loudly repeated to the presiding prince, from the day when Vitellius, then an adulator in his court, flattered lethargic Claudius with the expression—since when it passed into a common form.* But Philip's reign lasted five years only; in which time, having taken from poets some old privileges, on account of their obscenity, and built a town confining upon his native country, which still retains the name Phillipopolis or Filliba; revolting Decius called him to dispute the empire near Verona, as the Turks call it, where the Arab, by forced marches, brought his army, which on arrival fled treacherously to the newer favourite, bearing with them their general's head upon a pike, the better to secure pardon from the conqueror, who lived not indeed to enter his capital, though by his order the hottest persecution ever seen was begun there, inasmuch that Nicephorus says the crowd of martyrs grew so truly immense, that sand on the sea-shore might as easily have been numbered.

* *Sæpe facias* means do it often: preside many times over this amusement.

St. Lawrence's superior torments and constancy give him peculiar claim for distinction; the gridiron's form on which he suffered, is at this day perpetuated in the Escorial palace at Madrid.

Meanwhile the Roman empire passed swiftly through the hands of the two Decii, Priscus, Valens, Gallus and Volusian—who seemed vying with each other in cruelty towards our brethren, on whose obstinate denial of *their* gods and goddesses, was now charged all the misery of Rome—war, famine, pestilence, and dread of utter ruin from the barbarous nations, vainly bought off by Gallus with disgraceful gifts; and still returning fresh to the attack, armed with new powers, and eager for new plunder. Civil commotions too shook the metropolis, which, in the bosom of voluptuous folly, was enduring all the horrors of a contest caused by Æmilianus's revolt. It was not *then* that the exhausted state required copious bleeding: Montesquieu says how such internal broils strengthen the nerves of government, and tells how people accustomed to dispute at home, become forsooth invincible abroad. This doctrine men are preaching while I write; but the precept is dangerous and fallacious: Montesquieu meant a *young* state, not an *old* one.

Our first King James (I have read) was seized with an ague in the close of life; and feeling low-spirited at death's approach, some courtiers reminded him of a proverb used in England; and, Oh! said they, your Majesty must recollect, that *an ague in spring is physic for a king*.—Aye, but the adage meant a *young* king, replied the expiring monarch. The event in both these cases is the same.

Whilst one half of the Roman subjects, in all parts of the empire, were diligently cutting the throats of the other half—many falling upon religious accounts—and those who cared not about piety were contending for power; their helpless emperor, the once tyrannic Valerian, served the Persian prince Sapore for a footstool, whence every day he mounted his horse: till, tired with asserting this uncontested privilege, he flayed the wretched prisoner yet alive, and strewing with salt, revenged unconsciously on his pampered body, the agonies
he

he had delighted to inflict on Christians. The Roman empire next saw itself split and ruled by thirty tyrants, who could not however protect the limits of dominion, while each separate general fought for himself, not for his undone country—and the bold Ostrogoths spoiled all Bithynia, loading themselves with treasures of which they could not comprehend the value—nor seemed to know, while they were wasting Macedonia, that in that country had been born the sovereign of the world.

Gallienus meantime, a sensual prince, held the slight reins of government at home, and seemed (whilst slavery from mere habit ministered to his pleasures) so little disturbed by what had chanced abroad, that he gave himself wholly up to gay voluptuousness, making, as Shakespear says, his loss his sport; and senselessly delighting to hear his name recorded with that of Commodus, his model. Let him not lose his well-acquired fame; 'tis to the skill of Gallienus that we owe the first good plan of a fine hot-house, ice-house, and conservatory*—but the rough Goths hindered its execution. And now, disgusted with the sight and hearing of such ill-timed, such surfeiting absurdity; which, not confined to courts or palaces, spread among all the ranks of men at Rome—Paul, the first hermit on record, retired; fled from society of human kind, and living in a desert upon herbs and fruits, gave rise to the idea of obtaining favour from God, by voluntary exile from the company of those who debased their nature, and contradicted their reason; refusing the offered mercies of a Redeemer too, and destroying the effects, so far as in them lay, of his so great salvation. On this example afterwards were founded monastic orders—within our own remembrance nearly innumerable; and subject, for that cause and many others, to inconceivable abuses. Meanwhile the hierarchy held

* I have read somewhere, that Alexander had the secret of cooling his liquors by ice, while he was in India, though Pliny speaks of it as new in Nero's time, and says that emperor boiled water first, that it might freeze the easier. If Alexander was acquainted with ice, what could the story mean of the spring Nicotris, whose waters were so cold they burst all vessels but a mule's hoof???

firm within the church, and copes and holy vestments now adorned it; though various heresies disgraced these early times of Christianity, when tares were sown which yet perplex the field. An enemy, our Saviour told us, was the planter; he said they should grow up along with the good corn, and who knows but that the harvest may be hard at hand.—But we're engaged not to anticipate, our business is with *Retrospection*; nor must lose sight of the vast Gothic irruptions which at the hour we treat of, more frequent and in fuller tides, rolled o'er the habitable globe, amazing all, but chiefly overwhelming Peloponæus and its contiguous classic countries. Athens and Argo; Sparta, Thebes, Dodona; theatre of glory, virtue, valour, elegance: consecrated scenes! where Plato taught, where Sappho sung; where Phidias gave to their resemblances in marble so warm an animation, so discriminating a character, they hoped from him a second immortality. But from this flood of barbarism, far worse than that which their Deucalion and Pyrrha were fabled to survive—not even *stones* escaped. The temple of Ephesus, one of the seven wonders of the world, was burned in this confusion; and by a pillar which may be seen at Pisa yet, its general merit may in some measure be estimated. But when the unfeeling north poured forth her waste inhabitants, and bid them roam for prey, regardless of the ruin left behind: onward they press'd in countless multitudes, unconscious shoals; as when old Ocean half acquires solidity from life that stirs within; bringing, at stated times, innumerable fish down from the fertile Baltic, to be lost in that capacious aggregate of waters that clasp around the southern continent—so burst these Goths and Vandals on mankind, sparing no place, no sex, no age, and no opinion. The dragon then indeed disgorged a flood out of his mouth to destroy the woman, well representing our Christian church, but the earth helped the woman, as St. John saw in his Apocalypse; and that religion meant to be swept away, escaped the violence; strengthening in spite of oft repeated blows, prospering in spite of oft repeated plunder.

Councils had long been held, and some few years before, under the
papacy

papacy of Anterus, a Grecian martyr, had been made the rule of translating from one bishoprick to another, after the example of St. Peter, who (said he) we know resided first at Antioch. Yet modern Romanists assert their church to be the very *earliest* on record—Strange, wilful ignorance, or inconsistency. Claudius meantime, a bold Dalmatian, who succeeded to the dissolute Gallienus, found business enough to employ all his thoughts, without disturbing others in their worship.

Trebellius Pollio tells us how *his* general, so justly surnamed *Victor*, slew in one day by stratagem and war three hundred thousand Goths, near *Lacus Benacus*, now *Lago di Garda*, in Italy. That the man himself died of the plague there, is much less incredible; such slaughter must have infected the air. Renowned Aurelian next invested with the purple, soon proved how well plebeians might deserve it: his mercantile extraction, and inordinate love of wealth, prompted him to *gild* the first, and display the power of the second. Orleans yet stands a monument of his munificence—a *golden* city still, and still preserving his name who built it—*Aurleian Aurelian*. It has perhaps in these later ages given title to the best and worst of all the princes professing Christianity. But Rome was not forgotten; he compass'd her round with a wall fifty miles in circuit; he numbered the people, reformed gross abuses, pardoned with unexampled greatness of mind his rival Tetricus, and subdued the rebel Zenobia by his generosity, after having triumphed over her armies by his success. 'Tis said her having signed her own name *first* in letters that pass'd between them, was the original and deep-seated cause of Aurelian's rancour, though it appears to our eyes on *Retrospection*, that there was no need of aggravation after she had erected an independent throne, and called herself solemnly Queen of the East. In times of refinement however, as there are more vain men than interested ones in the world, incivility produces stronger aversion than does injury: among savages there is no offence but a blow, and among mere monied people, no offence but a robbery.

'Tis told by some historians how, when he would have signed an edict for persecuting the Christians, his uplifted hand was preternaturally arrested: happy had such been the fate of that traitor's arm who basely assassinated this gallant sovereign, able to govern with dignity and wisdom, although with rigour and roughness—a world so turbulent, and subjects so corrupt: a general—who had driven the invading Franks from before the gates of old Ravenna, and in the course of many victories, had killed by his own personal prowess nine hundred enemies of Rome. Longinus, now inspired by the muses, wrote criticism with poetic fire; and Porphyry collected with such spider-like diligence every argument against our faith, that no enemy since his time has been able to find a new one—

Destroy their fib and sophistry, in vain,
The creature's at his dirty work again.

Nor has the old cobweb, first well fastened by this adhesive tormentor, been ever (we must avow) completely swept away. But Tacitus and Probus next for awhile detain the *retrospective* eye; as by their indefatigable efforts they checked the progress of approaching ruin. Carus, Carinus, Dioclesian too, delay our advance from these far distant periods, by their splendour; while Gibbon, whose scruples of incredulity never perplex him, when dilating upon the favourite theme of Pagan virtue or of Pagan greatness, believes implicitly that the whole furniture of that prodigious colosseum, which he himself has seen, and known to be 584 feet long, and 487 broad, was of solid gold, silver, and amber; that a belt studded with precious stones, divided there one rank from another, reaching all round it, as do the boxes in our English theatres; that nets to keep off the wild beasts were of gold wire, and that a silken canopy was drawn over the top to shade performers and spectators from the sun. This may be true, but nothing in Scripture is so hard to believe; because silk sold for its own weight in gold, when Aurelian, who denied his Empress a robe of it as too costly, led queen Zenobia

Zenobia through the streets in triumph.* Tacitus, the historian, indeed, does mention *vestis serica*, and Mr. Murphy translates it into silk apparel; but I fancy that must have meant thin muslin, *vestis bombycinæ* rather; unless 'twas gauze; for Mr. Murphy says in a note, that Seneca censured the Roman ladies for wearing transparent dresses, and he knows perfectly that silk is not transparent; he knows too, that Englishwomen, in his own time, rejected silk clothes, because they were *not* sufficiently voluptuous or transparent, substituting muslins of cotton substance in their stead. As to the belt studded with precious stones, I doubt whether the diamond mines of South America, then undiscovered, could have furnished it. *Baltheus in gemmis, et in lita porticus auro*, is to me no proof; the poet would have said with Prior—*Odd's my life, must one swear to the truth of a foug?* Besides that, modern Italians have a way of calling many stones *gems*, to which our English annex no such idea. Jasper, granite, pavonazzo, and carnelion; nor are the writers of Augustan history scrupulous, as it appears, when relating the follies or gaieties of the moment. Who can believe their tale, that Elagabalus built a lofty tower, whence to throw himself in case of an attack: when we all know the creature reigned not four years in all; and of them surely was not in fear from rival power four months, during which time no such high fabric *could* have been constructed; and they cover the steps with gold and pearls too; they cost us authors nothing. If any such tower ever did exist, it was a toy, I fancy, fit for an emperor of fourteen years old to play with. The very extraordinary donative and show presented to the Roman people by Probus, appears less improbable, when he transplanted two hundred forest trees into the vast arena; then turning loose to frolick in their shade one thousand fallow deer, one thousand boars, and half as many ostriches, with many tropical birds from Africa, threw the

* Vopiscus says so.

doors open to permitted plunder, and diverted himself by seeing all suddenly devoured, and swept away by an impetuous populace. Something of the same spirit of amusement subsisted since my time in Italy, and called Coccagna. A light scaffold is not seldom, even now, erected on a holiday at Florence or Bologna; and lambs, calves, kids, cakes, loaves, fruits, &c. placed on its shelves, adorned with ribbons, flowers, &c. on a signal given, in burst the mob; and 'tis the sport of more elegant spectators to see the havock that they make, all in a moment. When Heliogabalus made a Coccagna, he set up for pillage, fat oxen, camels, horses, asses, stags: The Augustan history says, *servos*, servants; but Salmasius wisely thinks they were not *slaves*, but rather *cervos*, deer. I have seen a print of this diversion in a house somewhere in the west of England. We have no entertainment of that kind, unless the sudden carrying off what was provided for our King's dinner at Westminster-hall, after the coronation, may be called such: or the taking of Pocklington Island, upon Derwent-water-Lake, which every 28th of August may be seen covered with boats and barges for a mock attack upon the little fort, raised by its generous proprietor on the morning when he puts his ramparts in a state of defence, with barrels of strong beer, hams, and pieces of beef for a while, then suffers all to be stormed and plundered for the amusing of his rich neighbours, and for benefiting his poor ones; surrendering the castle, after six o'clock, at discretion of the ladies, for whom a ball and supper is prepared. But Dioclesian's acts recall us back to Rome, where, having defeated all his competitors, extirpated the Quingentiani legion, and made a horrible slaughter of the Goths in Pannonia, found leisure to set on foot the fiercest persecution against Christianity which its professors had till then endured. 'Twas he too instituted or approved the method of outlawing his subjects accused of this persuasion, so that justice could always be had against them—never for them: a Christian's evidence was not to be accepted; nor had they any protection

tion from society ; whence, hunted now in every shape from every place, throughout the empire, he destroyed hundreds at once ; whole clusters and communities, fired like to nests of vermin or of insects, and tortured individually beside ; by governors willing to delight the Emperor's fancy, encouraging in him false hope of their possible extinction. Christians were now scarce to be seen by day, during which hour the catacombs and mansions of the dead concealed their pious fervour : while Caius, a pope nearly related to Dioclesian himself, redoubled his attention to keep within bounds of necessary prudence, that spirit which prompted many to provoke the hand of power, and seek the crown of martyrdom.

Perpetual pondering upon one subject will produce something not unlike insanity : our hapless predecessors meditating in solitude upon those *mysteries*, for truth of which they suffered so much sorrow—ended their round of thought oft times in error ; and wandering in wildernesses of conjecture, the Manichæan heresy made itself known amongst us. Manes, a Persian empiric, mingled the Zoroastrian mythology with our religion, and set up a new origin of evil in contradiction to Moses's account, making two co-eternal principles in imitation of Ormuzd and Ahrimanius. Had not this fellow, from want of skill in medicine, mistook the case of Prince Varanes, son to the king of Persia, for which his father had him flayed alive, and his skin stuffed with chaff, *more* mischief had been done : his errors have however lasted long enough ; and Voltaire, perhaps in sport, appears by his romance of *Candide* to have believed them. I mention of the many wild opinions which pressed upon, and would have strangled our religion in its cradle, had it not been truly of divine original, only those few which have remained till now ; counting dead serpents would be loss of time,

Tho' swarming then
With complicated monsters head and tail,
Scorpion and asp, and amphibæna dire.

The

The Python's self however, paganism, now swelled even to bursting with the divine honours lately assumed by Dioclesian, made dangerous attempts almost untried before ; and servile Rome saw that bright diadem which she had refused to her *first* emperor's merits, tried on by the irresistible despotism of her thirty-ninth, a plebeian by family, by original profession a scrivener, yet by the coincidence of military prowess, with uncommon turns of fortune in his favour, we see the *æra actiatica* in this reign put an end to ; and mankind counting all events from his birth, who had no name but what the place supplied that he was born in Dioclea. This is strange ; but far more curious still the tale told by Vopiscus, how Dioclesian, when in Mona once, meeting a druidess, gave her a small donation ; but the woman said he need not to be so sparing of his money, for after he had killed a boar he should be emperor. The young soldier delighting in field sports killed many boars ; and laughing, used to say, the sybil was mistaken ; for his fortune mended slowly : I kill the boars, said he, but others eat the brawn. Time rolled away however, till at length Arrius *Aper*,* father-in-law of Numerianus, treacherously grasping at the purple, murdered his daughter's husband. This traitor was consigned to Dioclesian to dispatch, who asking his name, and hearing it, soon sheathed his bright sword in the assassin's bowels, crying, *et hunc aprum cum cæteris* ;† which done, the soldiers without deliberation, praising his decisive stroke of justice, took him suddenly upon their shoulders, and saluted him *Imperator*. The life of this man then was marked by wonders, among which the strangest far was the rare project he conceived of building a new palace at Salona, whence to retire, like Sylla, from the adulation of subjects whom he suspected, and from the vengeance that he dreaded for his crimes. 'Tis said the taste in which his house was built, proves that the arts as well as sciences decayed ; and when historians relate the wonderful occurrence, language itself, like other branches of lite-

* *Aper* means boar.

† And *this* boar among the rest.

rature, seems sinking under a rushing torrent of barbarity, very difficult to be accounted for even by the wisest authors who have written upon the decline and fall of the Roman empire : a theme of cavil now, a subject of contention, for modern petty wits and demi scholars ; an object to be peeped at through my smoaky glass of wretched *Retrospection*. Enormous land-slips thus confound the naturalist, and crush the farmer ; whilst vile attorneys only find account, by urging on disputes for deluged or for dislocated property.

C H A P. V.

FROM THE DEATH OF DIOCLESIAN TO THE DEATH OF
CONSTANTINE THE GREAT.

PART OF THE FOURTH CENTURY.

HAVING now climbed up the first three hundred years after our Christian æra, speculation begins to stagger at the height; and *Retrospection* stands herself at gaze. Lighter than Phaeton my whirling car seems shaking under me at every step;

Nor will my steeds for observation stay,
But hurry on—too fast to mark our way.

A moment however must be bestowed on the retreat of Dioclesian; who, after reigning twenty years or more, whether fatiated with un-availing triumphs over yet unsubdued barbarians, or disgusted by perceiving that all his subjects blood spilt in that sanguinary period availed nothing towards preventing perpetual conversions from paganism; or whether he was afraid of being assassinated like his predecessors, an apprehension by no means ill founded, quitted his crown, his purple, and his pomp, and settled at Salona as he had long intended. Let the effect on *us* be what it will, the example struck his colleague Maximian with such force, that he, from imitation or caprice, adopted it, having first built the beautiful amphitheatre at Verona, which I saw in admirable preservation about the year 1786, and some thermæ at Milan made with immense expence: those fabricated at Rome by Dioclesian yet remain so as to afford a very good idea of their grandeur. Cæsars however had been long created by both Emperors, in
order

order to divide the cares of government, some time before their retiring from its fatigues, and those two youths naturally and quietly ascended the throne together. Galerius Armentarius, so named of the flocks he fed in early life, was choice of a prince sprung from plebeian stock. Constantius Chlorus, a collateral descendant of the active and spirited emperor, Claudius, was the man chosen by Maximian a low-born soldier, and so completely illiterate, that when his panegyrist compared him and his colleague to Scipio and Hannibal: Those men, said he, I never heard about *till now*; they should have likened Dioclesian and me to Jupiter and Hercules. Wit will sometimes stoop to servility; the orators took the hint, and did actually, the next opportunity, so compare them. The appellations remained in use ten years ago; we saw some pillars in the street at Milan belonging to a temple set up in honour of the Hercules Maximian. They were about removing them, I remember, for purpose of widening the way, shewing no attention to poor Ausonius's verses—

Et Regio Herculei celebris, sub honore lavacri.

But that the battle of Actium, so long perpetuated by a calendar, should now be expunged, and the æra of Dioclesian substituted in its place, was a greater wonder, and a greater labour too, than any recorded of Hercules or Jupiter. The Abyssinian Christians are said to reckon by it still; and Mr. Gibbon says, that whole nations residing in the interior parts of Africa, do even yet retain many laws and usages of a *much earlier* date; those of the Mosaic dispensation. Should the ten tribes at length burst from those regions yet unsearched by avarice, yet unexplored by curiosity, more credit would be given to fictitious Esdras, who plainly says that they retired to Arfareth; and when the slave trade shall be finally abolished, their fears of advancing to the coast may fade away, and the sea be in that sense dried up for their return; but we must not forget our work of *Retrospection*. Whether our half countryman, the half emperor Carausius, lived in these days

or before them, Doctor Stukely and his antiquarians may determine. Amphibalus, long supposed the friend and fellow martyr of St. Alban here in Britain, where he was put to death, about the year 300, or soon after, was A. D. 1742, suddenly found out by Conyers Middleton to have been nothing more than an ecclesiastick's *cloak*, from which circumstance the Doctor derives much source of empty triumph: yet now that the joke is over, some one will perhaps find out in their turn, that he caught up this cloak of bishop Usher's somewhat too hastily; for Frizius and Bale both speak of Amphibalus as of an author who left several tracts behind him; and sure the last named of these writers, though not perhaps an acrimonious Calvinist, as French biographers would wish us to believe, was yet unlikely to lose so good a story against popery, by which he had himself been persecuted under the reign of Queen Mary. One may observe indeed that all the arguments urged by Doctor Middleton, have much less in them of learning than of satire; more of plagiarism (I have heard) than of originality; and much more gay asperity than solid good sense. A town made famous in 1529, when Lutherans entered their necessary protest against the tyrannous innovations of the Romish church, first raised its head by command of Constantius Chlorus; 'twas called Nemetum then, the Germans name it *Speyer Spires*: and while this Emperor repaired or fabricated new cities in Europe, Galerius his colleague revenged upon revolted Persia some of the indignities offered there to unhappy Valerian. This *Ré Pasteur* however seemed to possess few of the shepherd's qualities: implacable and fierce, the rigour of Aurelian's well-judged punishments became sharp cruelties when dictated by ferocious Armentarius, who having succeeded to a sceptre more glittering to sight than extensive in the stretch, held it no long time; and seemed himself aware, that like an island of ice, though sun-beams played on its top, and created colours of immense variety; though the structure still appeared rocky, and danger waited on its every stroke against those whom accident should drive across the course of its current; his empire

pire wasted imperceptibly below, and the world, waiting but a little while, might see it topple by its own weight, and perish from internal thaw. Galerius had however *one* amusement; the groans of tortured martyrs to Christianity diverted his cares of state, and coarse severities dispensed among his own immediate servants, supplied some momentary gratifications to a temper made sourer by a loathsome and incurable disease. The *morbus pediculosus*, of which Sylla and Herod died, and for which Galerius, finding no relief, killed himself in despair, does really seem by all one hears or reads of it, a singular judgment reserved for singular offences against Heaven. One hundred and seventy-four thousand mortals were in this last reign sentenced to die for religious opinions merely; but the world was either more thickly peopled then than now, or population, like wealth, was more concentrated: indeed, the great destruction of two hundred thousand souls by an earthquake at Antioch some time after these events, contributes to persuade me that one town did, in those days, encircle a larger number of the human race than present modes admit of. Perhaps the country too was more deserted; they are hot latitudes of which we speak, and readers who have never left this island will scarce conceive how vermin, insects, and other petty vexations of warm climates, drive men to seek shelter in large cities from that fervid sun which glows in a wide horizon. Like that hot sun, so blazing, so intolerable, shone the last years of this successful Emperor, whose terrors drove our panting predecessors to seek, in caves and subterranean recesses, some repose for their weary feet, some quiet moments in which to model their then plastic church; of whose stability Caius, first cousin to Dioclesian, had already been careful, and regular dignitaries had been by him appointed: deans, and sub-deans, and presbyters, as if some secret assurance had been granted him that such would soon be wanted; for little reason, founded on fact, had they to hope deliverance was so near. In those black days when after Caius' death, sorrow pervaded the damp vaults where sad Marcellus sat, and mourned his murder'd friends: yet out of those that still remained alive, elected fifteen mortified and melancholy,

choly, yet resolute and active servants of their Saviour : these he called cardinals, and put them on scarlet stockings for distinction's sake, and likewise for propriety ; their office being not only to bury martyrs, but of course to bathe their feet and legs in blood of their companions, among whom the institutor of their appropriated employment soon was numbered, being by Galerius' command closed up alive in human excrement ; a new torture, chiefly inflicted upon such offenders who had refused when called upon to incense or perfume the heathen temples. How little did the Christians then foresee the changes to be made in their temptation ! How little hope the happiness at hand ! How little too did Dioclesian dream of finding at Salona the death he had so mercilessly dispensed at Rome ! He died however, and the great Constantine, fearing some treachery from Armentarius, escaped to York, where tidings were soon brought of that suicide by which he reigned sole emperor, Maxentius only at first trying with any prospect of success to impede his passage to the purple. On *his* exploits, how willingly will *Retrospection's* eye repose ! On him who in the midst of victory thought on the God who gave it ; till the warm heart kindling in religion's cause, followed the visionary banner through the world. *In hoc signo vinces* was verified whithersoever he turned his arms. Maximin, Maxentius, Licinius, sunk before him. The most renowned in war were found unable to support the contest : and Constantine acknowledged master of mankind, now sought to civilize, convert, reform them. Proclaiming himself a Christian, all persecution ended in an instant, and the sorrows of our suffering fathers were turned into encouragement. Servile Rome followed implicitly her leader's example, nor could Jupiter and Juno assert their cause at all, when unprotected by imperial power :

Nor all the gods beside,
Longer dar'd abide,

Not Typhon ending huge in snaky train :
Our babe to show his godhead true,
Could even in swaddling bands controul the damned crew.

MILIN.

No

No martyr, unless Sopater the historian may be called such, offered to seal his faith in pagan deities by blood, and all *their* worshippers dropt off apace. The sovereign called from banishment and drew forth from obscurity such as best could teach and most adorn the new religion, and his first proof of being well confirmed in it was his refusal of a Roman triumph; loudly ascribing his apparently preternatural successes to a superior agency and power. The race of gladiators next slowly and sullenly withdrew—Marcus Aurelius had endeavoured to suppress them, or make them fight at least with foils, not swords—but his too feeling propositions were rejected. The Empress Helena, of Cambrian origin and gentle blood, detested these diversions; she had been long before baptised in Britain, where the high road yet remains called by her name *Rhwydd yr Helena*—ending with the place now called Pont Aberglaslyn; *then* known by her having cross'd the water there, whence it was long denominated Fordgham *Helen yr Luedhog*—the ford of Helen the puissant, near Kader Idris. How peculiarly pleasing to *us* must be the thought, that softening the heroic bosom of her son, 'twas *she* prepared it to receive with eagerness, the mystic truths he was now ardent to defend and propagate. But still destructive inroads from the Goths disturbed his peaceful projects; they invaded Thrace, they even approached Nyssa, birth-place of our heaven-protected hero; whose rapid, well-concerted march to meet them is celebrated, even by those who least delight in doing justice to his merit. One hundred thousand barbarians however, hemmed round by stratagem, died nearly all at once, through famine, in the plains of Thessaly, whilst Clodomir of France made himself duke of all those districts now called Brabant, Holland, and Westphalia, and reigned there thirty years. The Allemanni or Germans resisting these incursions, won sometimes, sometimes lost; but the times we are reviewing considered acquisition as the only right of tenure; and I have read that the name *Getae*, perhaps *Gothi* too, formed itself from the verb *getan to get, got, gotten*. 'Tis certain the Brigantes of South Britain, Ireland, Spain, and the Alpine regions,
derived

derived their common name from *Brigand*, a robber, in Celtic languages; and the Franks or French retain it as such still. Germans or *Wer Mans* means a *man of war*, and Mr. Pinkerton quotes Herodotus to say, that there was in his day a people so called among the Persians. There certainly were *Teutons* in Peloponæsus—but *Teuton* and *Titan* mean spreaders over, or coverers of the earth.

Rebellions on the Rhine next called Rome's conquering general to Cologne, where he obtained a signal victory, and deferr'd destruction to a future day. And now the church and state indissolubly united, had reason to expect true happiness from the alliance, had not such viscous and thorny heresies perplexed our Christian councils, each struggling to gain over the Emperor to their opinions—oft times, and indeed chiefly dividing upon points which human reason cannot settle, because human comprehension cannot reach: the Nicene Creed grew necessary for this cause. Till Arius and Donatus arrogantly, with their frivolous though daring disputations, disturbed the sweet comforts administer'd by Constantine, that comprehensive symbol of belief called the Apostle's Creed, contented all. St. Peter and St. John had required no more from their followers, who by subscription to the articles of which it consists, obtained originally at Antioch the honourable appellation of Christians; and those who refuse that title to such as willingly receive that creed, wrong them, and should be told so.

Meanwhile great Constantine's innumerable virtues, his high heroic deeds, his glowing zeal, would surely have effaced still greater faults than was his leaning towards the heterodox side of a sharp controversy little understood, concerning the grand mystery of hypostatic union, meant for man's veneration, not dispute. Lactantius now grown old, published his Institutions, confirming to himself the title of our Christian Cicero—Tullius Christianus; he was preceptor to the young prince Crispus, whose morals did the tutor little credit; but manners lagg'd behind, while doctrine earnestly employed itself on points so little practical. Rostoch now raised its head upon the Var, Jerusalem was repair'd

pair'd, *sicut in principio* was gratefully added to our *gloria patri*, and the hands of hangmen felt a long repose. St. Anthony then fearing temptation from a new quarter, prosperity's warm beam accelerated his departure; and having collected other individuals seized with the same presentiment of danger, and the same notion of escaping it as 'twere by force—flew to the desert, where they erected the first convent upon record, calling its inhabitants Monks of St. Basil, but binding them with *no vows*. Our Saviour's precept, *Swear not at all*, was as yet fresh in every Christian's memory; the more so, as he condescended to give a reason for his command—because you cannot, says he, make even a hair of your head white or black. The sudden and violent overthrow of convents in our time proves our Lord's position; men should not swear unless they knew that they could keep their oaths: for yourself you may promise, but not for another; his power may compel the breach of them. A literal obedience then is best and safest, *Swear not at all*. Mere mortals indeed, without this injunction, might have been easily justified in thinking, that when they swore to remain poor they would not have been hindered, and hindered too by them who never wished they should be rich:—experience, while I am writing, shews the contrary; but we have here to do with *Retrospection*. The church meantime, soon to be styl'd the Church of Rome; resounding with music and choral singers, illuminated by day as well as night with gaudy tapers of a thousand colours, and crowded by statues, emblems, pictures and devices of various holy men and martyrs, departed this life in true faith and fear, acquired soon not only strength but splendour, not only splendour but a solid opulence, not only opulence but that which follows it—influence; hardening the *potter's clay* into a firm and fixt authority. Living zealots poured their profuse donations on the altar, and dying misers bequeathed to a community the wealth they could not bear to part with during life, or leave to enrich any individual.

The general taste too of times so propitious to softness and luxury, infected even the good and wise among us, and gave a tincture of polytheism's

lytheism's ambitious gaiety to fabrics destined for the worship of an humble Saviour, who had not while on earth, though all his own, a place where he might lay his sacred head. While from such scenes St. Anthony, in pure aversion to their pomp, retired; under imperial protection now rose up on every side majestic edifices, that vied in all exterior ornament with pagan temples—dedicated to tutelary saints beside, as *they* were to subordinate divinities. Saints who had sung their hymns in hollow catacombs, or wandering houseless among barbarous nations, had disseminated with diligence that faith they were prepared to die for; propagating the most dangerous of all truths from the most disinterested of all motives. Among these Kebius, son to a duke of Cornwall, and pupil to Hilary bishop of Poitiers, is thought to have given the name of Hilary Point to a protuberance of rock, near Holyhead in Anglesea, still called *Caergybi* by the Welsh inhabitants, meaning the camp, or castle, or residence of *Kebius*. These taught a strenuous rejection of Arianism in the north, 'spite of all courtly terrors—but other snares from that hour compass'd Christianity around, and the seducer took another method;

For Satan now is wiser than of yore,
And tempts by making rich, not making poor.

Having, as the famous fable well expresses, blown vehemently against our then erratic worship with the rough winds of cruelty and rage; and having found the cloak of righteousness clapt closer to meet every blast and brave it, the warm sun of seduction now soothed the weary votarist of virtue, and wooed him to throw off what seem'd superfluous, unnecessary defence. Set free by supreme command, consoled by maternal fondness and personal indulgence, the Christians next (and surely without impropriety) availed themselves of Constantine's permission and his mother's wish; and set about removing the polluted shrine of Venus, which Adrian had erected on our Saviour's sepulchre, purposely to prophane it. So far was well—but when the venerated spot was
seen,

seen, was visited, a strong devotion, more fervent far than delicate, kindled at the view. Respect was lost in the wild bursts of passion; nor could decorum's self subsist an instant under the pressure of such crowds that crushed it; when hundreds being attracted by zeal, and thousands by curiosity, many unjustifiable whims took place: till the more prudent Emperor covered the ground, building upon its consecrated surface a beautiful church, expressing at once his piety and his munificence. St. Helena beside, by her unlucky, although natural and even praise-worthy propensity for collecting reliques of the tortured martyrs, while she surveyed their tombs with veneration; encouraged various, vexatious, and to say truth, *numberless* impostures, that have done more injury to our common cause than her warm feelings suffered her to fear, or the cold scoffers of our later days could wish.

Among the countless tricks and fraudulent devices of the time, I will just mention the idea of Jesus's swaddling bands being found, because the examiners she set to work lighted on cloths which fire had no effect on. These were made of the asbestos or *linum vivum**—salamander's wool, as 'tis not improperly termed: this curious mineral has, it should seem, in all ages seized strongly upon female attention; the lady of the manor of Auchindoir, near Strathbogie, had a petticoat made of it in 1760 when first discovered among the Scottish rocks, and Ciampini gained a pension from Christina queen of Sweden by shewing *her* its wondrous powers in 1678. Pliny describes it as of intrinsic value, equal to pearls (Nat. Hist. lib. xix. chap. i.). Giambattista Porta tells us, that an hundred and fifty years before his time it was so common in the isle of Cyprus, that ignorant old women there could spin and manage it with great dexterity; and the oriental Christians shewed rags of it in 325 from their *dolorum archives*, as reliques of inestimable value; but 'tis to be found in mines of old Mona,

* There is a way now of making *factitious* asbestos.

as easily as in sublimer or more classic latitudes. The ancient Britons understood its use too, calling it *maen ystinos*, and *urael*; which last word gives me pause, and makes one for a moment think that *urael* might possibly have some reference or some concealed analogy to *Uriel*, the angel of the sun, who lives in fire; but 'tis better be deceived by pious easiness of belief, than drawn out of our way by love of derivation. While the good Empress then sought sedulously upon Mount Calvary for some remains of the true cross, or any fuel to keep up the sacred flame so kindled; Constantine her son made a decree to supersede the ancient Jewish Sabbath, and establish Sunday as our weekly festival; preferring that day on which our Lord arose to the original rest from creation. He ordered Saturday to be a fast, because Christ's body then was in the grave; and this drew a strong line between our new professors of what was then called emphatically the New Religion, and those who still observed the law of Moses. With *them* the heathen for three whole centuries persisted to confound us; yet notwithstanding all their efforts, nor soft credulity nor callous unbelief, neither the biting frosts of sharp severity, nor any idle channels cut by mild encouragement, have been permitted yet to check the progress of that hallowed stream, whereof who drinks, quaffs immortality and joy. The spring, like that of Nile, rose silently and unperceived; like that, it has diffused health, happiness, and cultivation; the mouths too towards the end, are divided; but acknowledge the same head, and roll to the same ocean of everlasting bliss.

Among the numerous pilgrims which came flocking to the lately-opened sepulchre, St. Jerome mentions Britons; though partiality must own our island produced few inhabitants worth noticing in these so early ages. Most of the English youths had been drawn into Gaul as recruits for Roman armies, ever fighting to retain provinces and possessions that crumbled hourly from their grasp. Humanity could do no more than Constantine was doing, towards holding up a sinking sovereignty, which plunged a little deeper in its quaggy bottom every day:

day : and seeing that Rome was become no central post where to stand best at bay, whilst barbarism burst in upon the limits of the empire on every side, and oftentimes on all ; he turned his thoughts upon removal of the royal residence to some place nearer the middle point of his dominions, widely, but weakly extended towards the east. It was now little less than seven hundred and forty years since the great General Camillus, by persuasion, had hindered the people and senate of Rome from transmitting to Veia the seat of that government, destined to bear rule over the whole earth : the charm was broken, so were the spirits of the ancient inhabitants, whose gay descendants, far more flexible, had learned to treat as vulgar prejudices all opinion of a local influence ; their capitoline Jove too was quietly carried away ; and where the court was, there would be the courtiers ; who willingly abandoned the city of their ancestors under the conduct of Constantine their king. He, not a native, viewed rather with abhorrence than delight, a land drenched in the blood of murdered innocents, and rank with every noxious poisonous weed that could by him have been supposed to spring from a warm soil so watered : besides that, Mr. Gibbon observes wisely, how the original professors of our faith lived and expired in a firm persuasion of Jesus's intent soon to destroy the mystic Babylon, they had such ample cause to hate and fear. Add to all this, Byzantium was acknowledged the most excellent and lovely situation in the world—it is confessed so still, although another hemisphere has been discovered, and that Christianity dispersed around it, which cost the tyrants of mankind such vain, such endless labour to destroy. The new chosen residence, like Rome, was built upon seven hills, and extended far beyond the ancient town that Byzas called after his own name, when he led forth a colony out of Megara, in the Peloponæsus—what time Manasseh reigned over Judea, and Psammetichus drank out of his brazen helmet, by command of the oracle, which foretold he should be king of Egypt. Constantinople, though now called by the Turks, Stampoul, has not *quite* lost the original de-

signation. Poul comes from Polis, the generic term, as who should say the *city* by way of eminence—thus *Nicopolis*, *Phillipopolis*, and a hundred more. To this great city then, was somewhere about the year 340 transferred, and carried clear away the imperial throne ; and from that moment may we safely date the impossibility of Rome's recovering the mode or substance of her pristine sway. Near this Constantinople too died, full of days and honours, her great founder, leaving his name for ages to a town which, at the end of eleven centuries, we shall see renouncing the religion she received with it. From his death likewise we must add with sorrow, that though future princes faintly opposed the insults and incroachments which prosperous barbarism continued to repeat, *their* opposition was *too* faint and feeble, whilst from the abandoned west shrunk the once swelling surge, the plenitude of power.

Thus, when the sea ebbs on a sandy shore, the watchful fisher sets his mark of *Retrospection* ; and if some bolder billow than the rest is sometimes seen to wash up against the pole, as if indignant at the thought of leaving that place dry, which his preceding waves had covered ; yet will the experienced mariner inform you, *The tide is going out.*

CHAP. VI.

FROM CONSTANTINE TO THEODOSIUS, A. D. 400.

THE successes of Constantine seduced Mr. Gibbon to an episode; his death irresistibly draws me into a digression. Like Balaam, blessing where he meant to curse, that great historian's book is found of use to those who desire and are earnest to deduce the truth of prophecy from ancient story, as an adversary's testimonial can never be suspected. He has, indeed, given us many land-marks, or set up *termini*, a phrase he would like better, whence our *retrospective* eye may see more clearly how religion and politicks have advanced, proceeding slowly on from station to station, till they arrive at the place we now find them. He fixes the time when oracles expired—he points the period when heathen sacrifices ended—he names the very day when papal power begun; and he asserts with equal sense and truth, that when contempt of the religion long established by law pervades a whole community, revolution cannot long be kept away. He tells from old times, what is completely verified by modern ones, that when the majority secretly loses strength, however clear the numbers may remain, without even possibility of contest; that state has suffered a most fatal symptom, and her destruction cannot be far off. His doctrine of the out-spread labarum, or sacred standard, said to be displayed before the following eyes of highly favoured Constantine, and deeply venerated by all primitive Christians, evince the antiquity of that form of words yet used by our Anglican church in baptism, when we promise manfully to *fight under his banner* who redeemed us; on which I trust was seen the *sign of the Son of Man*, which will appear

appear again before his second coming. Vide St. Matthew, chap. xxiv. verse 30. The *red cross*, the cross of Christ, dipt in his sacred blood, glows on our British standards still. Atheists and infidels strike to it as yet; Oh, may we never desert it! The words *ταυτω νικα*, *hac vince* however appeared on the mystic colours, shewn in a dream to Constantine: he told Eusebius the tale himself; Eusebius saw the banner that was made from his description of it, but says not in what language the encouraging sentence was written. Fabricius tells us, 'twas in Greek—as that was the Emperor's native tongue, it seems most likely that it should be so: Philostorgius says, the words were *in hoc signo vinces*—*in this sign thou shalt conquer*; but he saw it not, and perhaps only means himself to *translate* the sentence, not to *copy* it. Whether the sign was an illuminated *cross*, as one would think by Constantine's placing one near every statue erected to him in his lifetime, or whether the Christian's monogram,* with which the Emperor was well acquainted, having doubtless worn one about his person in his youth, much as the royalists of France, in 1794, carried in their pockets seals or tobacco-stoppers, wherein were concealed effigies of their murdered prince, is not decided—ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ being *Christ* in Greek, the first followers of our Saviour took the two first letters of the name, and striking the second through the first, made out this little cypher *✠* incomprehensible to heathen examination; for Jortin says, that many martyrs, who never, in days of persecution, thrust themselves forward to offend the civil power on purpose, suffered death, when called upon, better than those, who to obtain some notice from the government, rushed against torments, which in the hour of agony they shrunk from. This is natural, and Jesus seems on all occasions to prefer a fearing to a presumptuous disciple. Peter, who promised loudest, was first of all the eleven to deny his Master.

But we return to our summary. Lake Constance, and the pretty

* Transversâ literâ X summo capite circumflexo Christo in scutis notat.

town upon its borders, built in Switzerland, perpetuates the name of our great sovereign's *eldest* son—the word *Pagan*, yet in common use, records a practice of Constantius the *younger* son, who, when he first cashiered his heathen soldiers, quartered them upon the villages, *Pagi*, and thus the appellation spread from them to all who dissented from the legal and authorized church, preferring the old mode of polytheism. Cæsars were in the days we treat of, and long before, created generals, and considered as presumptive heirs; and now the regular division had taken place, and the two brothers shared the world's troubles, rather than its dominion between them. A proof that real power was no longer concentrated, as once under one head, may be produced in the numberless Imperators, Cæsars, *Domini* as they were styled since Dioclesian's reign. Monarchy, properly so called, was fading off, and a way paving fast for the new method by which mankind, weary of early and simple institutions, wished to be governed. Meanwhile a strong concussion of the earth, at Nicomedia, added to an eclipse of the sun, which quickly followed, with storms of unequalled hail, made many think that the last day was coming, although St. Paul's Epistles had assured us, that *Anti-Christ* must first appear on earth; that Man of Sin, who as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God; and although good Lactantius bid them wait with patience the expiration of the next two thousand years, from Christ's appearance in the flesh until his coming again in glory. This last opinion, held by the early church, originated probably from St. Peter's quotation of king David's words; how to our Lord one day was as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day; inferring thence, that as creation ended with the sixth, so would these periods of duration also, and the sabbatical, or seventh millenary, be that of our Saviour's visible reign on earth. Two thousand years were certainly allotted for obedience to the moral sense, and for conviction to such as should come after, that this same moral sense or law of reason was insufficient. These feeble fences against sin and sorrow being all swept away at once
by

by the Deluge, mankind had Moses and the Prophets for a guide about two thousand more; at which time Christ appeared, and the gospel dispensation has now, whilst I am writing, been so long in force, that one man and his son both living to the utmost stretch of permitted existence in this sublunary world, may see that portion of eternity expire, which reason and prophecy, apostle and evangelist, seem leading us to consider as the *last* allotted to the use of humanity. All this on supposition that no mistakes are made in that chronology which well we know is most exceedingly defective; many years have been devoured and sunk during the dark night of those Gothick ages at which our *Retrospection* peeps, at best through cloudy telescopes: when we reflect, beside, on the gross errors entertained by ancients of the very first rate abilities in other sciences, sciences of far easier attainment, 'twere difficult to be quite satisfied with their accounts of time. Wild opinions, strange anecdotes, and almost inconceivable facts strewed up and down the Augustan and Ecclesiastical History, might stagger many a reader. We moderns are however, most disposed to sneer at what is related of the *Christian* martyrs, and think it witty to ridicule the idea of throwing princesses of that persuasion—virgins, to be deprived of that name by the hangman, if they refused burning incense upon a heathen altar, Venus's for the most part: although Diana's processions at new and full moon were often as great a snare. Yet why controvert so probable an occurrence! The great Sejanus's daughter, upon her father's fall from imperial favour, was so served, only because *she was* his daughter; nor could the cradle's self prove a sure shelter to the unhappy infant of Caligula. The common punishments where no religious prejudices were concerned, exceeded far our limited ideas of times in which vice and virtue, severity and sweetness, knowledge and ignorance, were alike gigantic. A gentleman complained in Germany to Aurelian that one of *his* officers had violated hospitality by personal insults on the honour of his wife, who entertained the General at her house—no more was necessary; this rough commander calling the wretched culprit before him,

him, had his two feet fastened to the top of two trees forcibly bent together, which being then suddenly let loose, tore the criminal asunder at the moment of recoil. Nor was young Alexander less severe, when he caused the sinews of a judge's fingers to be all cut through for taking bribes, and as he had after all given the cause against the plaintiff lady who had bribed him, the final punishment was suffocation; for smoke he sold, observed the Emperor, and with smoke should he be paid. A stake being prepared therefore, surrounded by wet wood, Taurinus, though of consular dignity, was fastened to it, and smothered in her's and her protector's sight. Constantine threw some Frenchmen he had taken near the town of Bonne, in Germany, to be devoured alive by dogs, for theft and treachery: they deserved not, he said, to die the death of soldiers. But the time was fast approaching when these black clouds were doomed to roll away. The lesser light of human reason, says an admirable preacher, had been long appointed to rule the night of darkness, doubt, and gloom; the greater light of revelation's sun was sent at last to illuminate our clearer day; and He who sent it, made the stars also. Confucius, Epictetus, Plato, shone but by his permission, whilst with acknowledged difficulty, and cautious step, their followers stumbling, trod a narrow path. But Julian the apostate preferred, upon mature deliberation, the perishable taper of philosophical perplexity to the broad light of our reveal'd religion; his character arrests our *retrospective* eye, now for the first time contemplating the imperial purple clothing a disputant in deep theology. A person of whom more contrarieties may be recounted than ever lodged in any mind except his own; a prince, who although personally valiant, shrunk meanly, in his cousin's life-time, from avowal of that religion which he was afterwards ardent to establish, merely because danger then attended its confession; a man, who although bigotted to his own opinions, wished not to punish those who differed from them; and who, though all must own him a stoic, a soldier, a scholar, and a wit, had the strange weakness to endeavour at finding out future events, by

marking grains of barley with Greek characters, and throwing them before a fowl to see which he would pick up, and what words those letters left or taken would compose. A kind of divination had, 'tis true, been practised, by considering, from time immemorial, sometimes the *corns* of barley, sometimes the *dough* or matter of the cakes offered in sacrifice: it was called *crithomancy*. Virgil represents Dido as offering up a barley cake in her last rite, when Chaos, Erebus and Hecate were invoked. This mode of sorcery to which Julian was addicted, had for its object the *infernal gods*; for *Ceres* still had influence over *Proserpine*; they were to tell who sought the Emperor's life, and he was to send such traitors, when he caught them, swift to the shades below. Thence the fallacious as magical encouragement he thus received, determined him notwithstanding, to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, and by so doing shake our faith to its foundation, which had so completely in many parts of the empire dislodged *his own*. That this temple should have been twice destroyed upon the same day of the year; that day the very one upon which Moses had broken the tables of the law so many ages past; that it was still venerated in its anniversary as giving birth to that ever blessed Virgin who, daughter to David, was made mother to Jesus Christ, escaped not the notice of apostate Julian, well instructed in the religion he forsook. Instead then of renewing persecutions against the professors of Christianity, he contented himself with shunning their society, laughing at their manners, and pointing them out as objects of general and deserved contempt; to increase which, he employed all his imperial power to prove the scattering and destruction of the Jews merely accidental. Builders and architects in consequence began the work of fabrication; but that strange hindrances rose against it (even in the eyes of Pagan spectators), neither ancient nor modern infidels deny. Julian, not easily repulsed, sent other men to Palestine, whence they returned baffled in every attempt by volcanic eruptions, that like masked batteries protected the ruin, prohibiting all approach, and rendering it incapable of repair; a
circumstance

circumstance which became daily more astonishing to the philosophical apostate, from consideration of the neighbouring soil, that as he well knew contained no fiery particles, nor was ever known to exhibit appearance of being combustible, except on that occasion. The laugh ran now against the Emperor, and his project; polytheism had lost her charms, and Julian's efforts to restore it were in vain: his own example, although seconded by virtuous conduct, excited no contagious piety in the multitude, who looked upon his slaughtered hecatombs with coldness, and only said horned cattle would be dear, when court devotion grew so sanguinary. A man who knew the world as Julian did, must have perceived this fatal symptom of his faith's decay; before the sarcastic sneer of derision beauty fades, wit is silenced, and even wisdom's self—*loses discountenanced, and like folly shows*. Our- selves have in our own time seen his'd forth fame, honour, excellence of every kind from Paris; when too soft Lutetia, known by that name in the third century, corrupted sunk into her destined quagmire of melting dissolution—unlike the town preferred by Julian above every other for its rough manners and bold honesty. Its then coarse but courageous inhabitants, formed a strong contrast to the voluptuous Syrians, a race the Emperor delighted to show his scorn of; purposely shocking the dainty residents of Antioch with his philosophic negligence of their long robes and curls, and paint and perfumes; adopting, in direct opposition to such manners, the uncouth customs of those rugged Gauls, which had the territorial appellation of *Parisi*, receiving visitants, petitioners, &c. with uncombed beard, tann'd skin, and inky fingers; but forgetting the good precept *nequid nimis*. 'Tis curious meantime to see France set the fashions even in this early age: she sets the fashion still. With levity unexampled having in these last fifteen years been considered by all Europe as a model: first of gay splendour and ostentatious elegance; next of brutality and ferocious rage; once eminent for loyalty little short of partial foolishness; then giving the astonished world a sudden exhibition of murder, treason, regicide. May this last

horrible fashion find no followers ! Could her admirer Julian see Paris now again, he would *again* perhaps find out one quality worthy his admiration, namely, her philosophical apostacy from that religion which he, with as little reason as herself, was prompted to desert. But the character of this Emperor has carried us too far ; the closing scene is nigh. Saporess, king in Persia, who called himself brother to the sun and moon, had put the Romans to intolerable straits, since death removed his great opponent Constantine : and warlike Julian now, after menacing *our* predecessors with the severities they should suffer on his return, set forward to meet the storm which gathered eastward. Eutropius the historian, who followed him a soldier, and fought by his side, saw him fall before the siege of Ctesiphon, and bears undoubted testimony to his martial conduct in the field, and to his courageous death in the tent, many hours after the fatal wound was given. But Julian considered himself as going to unite his soul for ever with those deities from whom he held it to have been an emanation, and hoped reward for having promoted their service. As a philosopher he could not be an atheist. For our age of reason, as 'tis falsely called, was finally reserved renunciation of all future hope ; the consideration of death as an eternal sleep was far from *his* opinion or belief.

Ah ! que fausement, fausement courageuse,
L'ame doit te trouver affreuse,
Quand le néant est son espoir,
Quel espoir de ne rien pretendre !
Quel bonheur de n'en point attendre !
Quel secours de n'en plus avoir !

'Tis most remarkable perhaps that Julian should leave his life upon those plains of Dura where Nebuchadnezzar, just a thousand years before, had set up the famous golden image to Bel or Baal, but representing, I suppose, the sun ; for not adoring which colossus, the three Israelitish captives were thrown into a burning fiery furnace, and came out thence unhurt, under the visible protection of the Son of God, whose eternal
filiation

filiation was become, three hundred and sixty-five years after his appearance upon earth, a cause of such perpetual stumbling to his followers, that the heroic Bishop Athanasius newly restored, after incredible struggles and vexations, was at length half compelled to lend his name to a new creed, a fresh compilation of articles, a symbol of belief still upon stated days repeated in our church, though he himself assured the Emperor Jovian who succeeded, that there were creeds enough already. This truly Christian Prince, obliged to make somewhat disgraceful terms with haughty Sapor, reigned but a short time, during which period hailstones of enormous size fell at Constantinople, while ten cities in Crete were overturned by an earthquake. Upon his death, designed or accidental, there is a curious letter from St. Chrysostome, to the imperial widow Chariclo, a Grecian lady, saying, that of nine successors whom he had known invested with the purple, two only could have been supposed to pay the debt of nature by a common course of events. Jovian's demise however, might certainly have happened by neglect or ignorance of those about him, who left a chafing dish or brazier filled with charcoal in the apartment where he slept: thus making way for Valens and Valentinian, two brothers of opposite characters and manners, held together, as it should seem, by mere convenience of governing the empire by division. Its eastern possessions fell to Valens' share; while Valentinian resided at Milan, where his excess of veneration for good St. Ambrose is still remembered by its rich effects. The church, the library, filled with inestimable rarities, were in high preservation A. D. 1786; and 'twas remembered then among them, how when the fiery spirit of an emperor more zealous for the honour of our meek religion, than studious to obey its gentle precepts, was disturbed: it was St. Ambrose only, the *mellifluous* doctor who could sooth it to a temporary calm, and mitigate its wrathful violence. When that imperial anger was exerted against the strange propensity to witchcraft, which helped in those days to obscure men's reason and obstruct their virtue, one hardly can condemn it—less still when we reflect

reflect that Theodosius the warlike, the pious and the wise, escaped as 'twere by miracle from snares that were laid to dispatch him, only because that fatal cock before whom the letters of the alphabet were placed, had selected those with which his name begun. The town of *Valenciennes* however, rose to light about the time we speak of; and Britain had well nigh been called *Valentia*. Should one be led to observe that there was a fate in it, for that Britannia could not change her name, 'twere well we lived there in the present day, not *then*; this zealous ruler of mankind would have accused and punished us perhaps for onomantical propensities. Truth is, Rabb Assan, collector of the tales of the Talmud, is answerable for many of these silly fancies of conjuring by names, which originated from that source. Cabbala or cabalistic mysteriousness has left the world but a short time. There is a way of telling fortunes *now* in many parts of Italy called *la cabala*; and there was an odd lucky reference to the word in *both* senses of it, when Clifford, Ashburnham, Buckingham, Arlington, and Lauderdale, in Charles the second's time, with the initial letters of their names, formed the word *CABAL*. Addison refers to it as familiarly known in our Spectator's time, and the Abbé Villars alludes to it in the name of *le Compte de Gabalis*. What wonder then, if the fourth century found it a serious matter? The Emperor Valens was himself infected, and put many innocent mortals to death for no worse crime than a truly luckless initial. The times were full of terror and of danger. Disputes between Ursicinus and Damasus for the papal chair ran so excessively high, that an hundred and thirty-seven men were killed fighting in a Christian church at Rome, with fury ill becoming either party, till the sovereign himself interfered, and confirmed Damasus in the see. In gratitude for this event the *sicut in principio* was added to *gloria patri* after every psalm, which he commanded them to chant in alternate verse, as is the usage still in all cathedrals. Damasus was a Portuguese by birth, a poet and historian, who wrote the acts and sufferings of his predecessors, and though accused of some moral faults, he cleared himself;

self; and St. Jerome, to whom he dedicates his book, records him as of pious memory. The great Basilica of St. Syricius where they fought, is now *Santa Maria maggiore*. But heresy and luxury did then too sure combine to shake the faith of such new profelytes as were most easily offended, and felt themselves disposed (as many since) to charge upon Religion's self the excesses committed by her professors. That Damasus fought not the good fight, Jortin considers as so good a joke, he has it both in the preface and the work—yet is there little need to suggest subjects of derision to those who are ever willing to deride us; and if great Theodosius did afterwards approve the purity of this Pope's faith, he certainly no more approved of battles in the church than Dr. Jortin does. Irregularities of conduct, and haughtiness of demeanour wholly inexcusable, do doubtless mark the moments we are writing of, when gilded cars, prancing steeds, and numerous retinue attendant upon Christian bishops, began to fright St. Gregory Nazianzen; and ill-instructed votaries to the ever-blessed Virgin propagated collyridianism in Brabant, where she was directly and positively adored—not with *dulia* merely, but pure *latria*, and incense offered to her as queen of heaven. The source of that mad mischief rises in polytheism, whose *Mater Deorum* was easily confounded by young converts with our *Mater Dei*, and there is now a bronze figure of the Madonna in the Vatican—or was in 1786, with a high tower on her head, and all the insignia of Cybele, to whose honours she succeeded; and this explains the reason why mutilated priests officiate before her shrine at Loretto, as eunuchs or semi-eunuchs were of old appointed to serve the mother of the gods. These people had indeed, during the times under our *Retrospection*, an almost boundless influence upon the world, which influence increased since Asia became seat of universal empire: for no longer contented with sway obtained as formerly through the vices of monarchs addicted to criminal pleasures, they resolved to secure it now by means of ill-understood devotion, ruling the hearts and consciences of the religious princes, who
put

put themselves and families under *their* common guidance. But whilst enervate softness mark'd the east, a rougher scenery displayed itself in Scotland, whence Eugenius and Euthodius were cruelly thrust out, and exiled to perish with hunger in the Isle of Man; till Romachus, the petty tyrant of Caledonia, having offended his barons by this act of treason against youths of a royal blood, they cut his head off, carrying it in triumph upon a pike's end, according to the true spirit of such irregular and turbulent times. The sons meanwhile of Cynetha Wedig, whose mother Gwawl* was sister to St. Helena, ruled on the shaggy top of Mona high, where the Loegrian Britons had retired from fury and encroachment of the Saxon chiefs; having first cleared the island from piratic rovers from the Irish coast, they settled, and Caswallon then obtained (some say) the appellation of *Draco Insularum*. I thought the *dragon crest* and perhaps *rouge dragon* had been derived from him; but Pennant, who best knows such matters, brings them from Uther Pendragon: he has himself a right to bear it, as I have read or heard, deriving his long-traced lineage from Vortigern; and it should seem that dragons were not new to the world after crusading times, *by this*: though Warton thinks they were. Yet 'tis hard to believe, because *Brescia Brixia* gave it for an ensign in early days, if we believe the testimony of Rubæus. Be this as it may, science had certainly begun to dawn among the barbarous nations; and a faint distant light, as Rome began rolling back towards opacity, might be discerned to promise day among the Goths, when Athanasius, the Cecrops of modern ages, fixing in Thrace, encouraged Ulphilus, an Arian bishop, to invent runic characters, and had the satisfaction of seeing those arts of civilization sown, which were destined to revive after the grand deluge of darkness, urged onwards by the Huns and Vandals, should be dried off. But before then the timid Valens was consumed in a small house he had retired to from rage of

* Gwawl means Giulia, Julia, Juliana: the Gillian of our English ballads.

war, which soon pursued him there and burned with fire. His rugged colleague Valentinian died in an agony of passion, bursting a blood-vessel with his own violence at seeing himself forced to receive ambassadors from savage leaders of armies he at once despised and feared; but having associated Gratian his son and successor, the loss was felt the less; while furious Maximin, a name that ever calls to mind ideas of tyranny, ruled but a little while. One of these semi-barbarous emperors, I forget which, had for his favourites two shapeless bears, probably less ferocious than himself; and excellent at ridding their master of friends or of petitioners he liked not. That nothing may appear impossible, I can myself recollect hearing of a country gentleman residing in Lancashire or Cheshire some threescore years ago, who had the same taste of domestic amusement; and when more wine was called for than he wished to give, Call Dolly in, said he, to sweep the room. Immediately a high huge female bear, walking on two hind-feet, with a long broomstick between her fore-paws, entered the door, and quickly sent away the terrified spectators. But we return to feeble Gratian, who, as might be expected, soon fell before such force as Maximin's, but like Nerva, he had been careful to provide the world a master—rich in every endowment, strong in every ingredient that constitutes true courage; wise to conduct these gifts to the best purpose, and learned to obtain new lights from reading, should his own prove insufficient. In Theodosius, a Spaniard like himself, even the remembrance of Trajan might be sunk; he was the last emperor that went out with the Roman armies, and he lived till four hundred years were past since our redemption. Various in talents, though single in excellence; he encouraged piety, he practised morality, he rewarded valour, and supported for a while expiring knowledge. *He* called the Church of Christ the *catholic*, or general, or comprehensive Church *Universal*. Happy and pleasing and fortunate appellation! which she will wear yet to the end of time, and against which the force of men or of dæmons never shall prevail.

C H A P. VII.

FROM THEODOSIUS THE ELDER TO THE DEATH OF ATTLA,

ABOUT FIFTY YEARS.

THE new Emperor's earliest cares were exerted to maintain unity in the church, solidity, if possible, in the state. He appointed the Nicene Creed to be read after the Gospel, as we have it now ; he procured condemnation of the Macedonian heresy, and reconciled the bishops Paulinus and Meletius, at Antioch. The Goths till his time inflexible, humanized apace : Athanaricus felt the impulse of taste ; residing by the Emperor's particular invitation at Constantinople, his manners softened, and having once been made sensible of the charms of civilization, he desired never to return, but died there, a convert to Christian customs ; and after the Arian mode of receiving it, to our faith likewise. But no efforts of imperial power, no writing of St. Gregory Nazianzen, no eloquence of good St. Ambrose, could root out *that* firmly-fixed heretical opinion, which at first seemed to have originated from desire of opposing errors promulgated by Sabellius, rather than with any intent of forming a separation in the church, whence nothing has ever been able to dislodge it—like the Jerusalem artichoke, which once planted, keeps perpetual possession of the ground. The north now filled apace with bishops and pastors, expelled from the capital by orthodoxy, which we shall soon see shrinking and ridiculed by triumphant Arianism, that viewed with scorn those who strove to enter at the strait gate, while St. Augustine lent his inimitable talents for a short time to the Manichæans, and Syricius, the Pope, paved the way for future pontiffs to require celibacy from their clergy,

clergy, whom he first restrained from marrying widows, or taking a second wife. Claudian, meantime, adorned these days with poetry, which scarce by us seems to have been praised enough—he makes the shade between classics and moderns somehow, and naturalists scorn the animal *qui forme la nuance*, as Buffon calls it, between one genus and another. A Tuscan friend told me, that though his works were first printed at Florence, he was by *birth* a Spaniard. Vicenza disputes the first of these claims however, and boasts the earliest edition 1482, in folio: The younger Heinsius published an Elzevir, in 12mo. 1650; and having, in some favourite verses, called the Nile *suum*, critics believe that he was born in Egypt.

Theon, the sophist, flourished about this time; he was a famous mathematician, and Marcellinus, Ammianus Marcellinus wrote his interesting story; but controversy began to swallow up literature, and a new sort of barbarism deluged all works of fancy. The Emperor translated from the Hebrew into Latin, a tract, called *Pseudo Evangelium*, or the Fabulous Gospel; supposed to have been a composition of Nicodemus, the Jewish Doctor, who came to Jesus by night: Bishop Turpin, in Charlemagne's time, translated this imperial work into French, and from that version sprung *the mysteries*, acted in every Christian country, till about three hundred years back, from the moment in which I recommend *Retrospection*. Meanwhile, such was Theodosius's attention to learning in all its branches, and such his care for the dignity of its professors, that having observed Arsenius, tutor to his son, who was associated at eight years old, teaching his royal pupil bareheaded and standing, while the young Cæsar sat covered at his ease upon a chair; the Emperor made them change places instantly, obliging the instructor to sit, the learner to stand in future.

Coeval with these occurrences, King Snio ruled in Denmark, where dreadful famines had prevailed so long, a law was made to lessen the number of inhabitants, by putting children and old women to death;

but by advice of Gambara, a lady much listened to on account of her wisdom and virtue, milder measures were adopted, lots were drawn and those on whom they fell, were driven from the country to seek for themselves other habitations. From families thus migrating southward, sprung the Lombards, first known by the term Winili, or Wanderers; but after, from their long beards, not trimmed upon their march, styled Longobardi: The name of Gambara was not only extant among them, but highly venerated as late as A. D. 1786. Basil, or Basle, in Switzerland, was built about the time we are reviewing, and drew, from a Basilisk killed by their new wall, the appellation it has never lost: but Cologne, where Marcomir defeated hapless Gratian, whom Theodosius afterwards so well revenged, was even then a place of wonderful antiquity, having been only repaired by Agrippa, who found the ruins of an old town there fabricated, as they told *him*, by Colonus, a Trojan chief, in almost fabulous times, for which the noble Spaniard felt so much respect, he could not be induced to change it; and it is said, that the yet common word to *colonize*, in every language, comes from that ancient source. 'Twas Claudius added those few structures, of which some vestiges even yet remain; *he* called it Colonia Agrippina: That Mary de Medicis died, and that the immortal Rubens was born there, are boasts of its later existence. It was a custom to nominate the conquered places anew, in sign of subjugation, and reverence fills our *retrospective* eye, when it can fix on an original designation given them by leaders long ago laid in earth, or by accidents as long ago buried under fiction. Such is the word *allemands*, at this very moment the name by which an immense number of our bravest Europeans are well known; and Aventine persists, and so does Helvicius, their historians, that the distinguishing appellative came from Allemannus,* the Hercules of the

* Allemannus conquered a lion in single combat, tam'd him, and led him about in a chain; when arms were given in the holy wars, (for distinction's sake) the Bavarian Duke, or leader, chose a chained lion for his device.

north,

north, from whose chained lion the Bavarian nobles of this day claim some heraldic privileges, though he was contemporary with Moses, and of course with Erichthonius. A more fashionable etymologist says, they were first called so in the days when to oppose the progress of Caracalla, the *Germans*, or *war men*, rose in a mass from all surrounding districts, and gathered *all men, allemanni*, together for their own defence. This would do, but that Hunnus, Noricus, Boius, and Helvetius, the four sons of the half-fabulous hero, still live in the names of Hungary, Bohemia, and Helvetia. Noricum lasted a pretty long while too, but 'tis now Stiria, or Carinthia, Mr. D'Anville says, or both. The true Slavonians indeed, resident in what is now Bohemia, claimed that their irruptions into Italy were founded upon ancient just pretensions; nothing less than an old charter, said to have been extant in 1644, and running thus:—"We, Alexander, founder of the Grecian empire, conqueror of the Persians, Medes, &c. and of the whole world from east to west, from north to south, Son of great Jupiter, by fair Olympias, or so called—to you the noble stock of brave Slavonians, and to all of your language; because you have been a help to us in war, and valiant in faith and honour: we confirm all that tract of earth from the north to the south of Italy, from us and our successors, to you and your posterity for ever; and if any other nation be found there, let them be your slaves. Dated at Alexandria, the 12th of the Goddess Minerva. Witness Æthra, with the Eleven Princes, whom we appoint our successors."

Æthra, who is called to witness the deed, was mother to the Hyades, and daughter to Ocean and Tethys: it means, I suppose, that all was signed in the rainy season—*Pluviasque Hyadas*, Virgil calls them; but they are more familiarly known by name of Pleiades, or seven stars, in the neck of the constellation Taurus, of which six only are ever visible to the naked eye.

But an establishment far different from any made by war or politics claims, in the fifth century, a glance of *Retrospection*. St. Augustine
being

being converted and baptized, obtained a garden plot without the walls of Hippo, in Africa, where he and eleven friends formed the first order of mendicant friars, from which innumerable ramifications branched abroad, and made the world of monks a large and separate class of humanity. So differently, and so widely from the original institution ranged this new current of imaginative piety, that ceasing to murmur near the solitary paths of serious individuals, it came at last to roll in torrents of licensed beggary, and stagnate in pools of offensive ignorance. How little did the great founder of this idle fancy dream that such could ever have been the case! when with his virtue, his learning, and his leather girdle, he sought only to shun the temptations of riches, and obtain more time to converse with heaven. But these strange facts must teach us to beware of human institutions, specious though they be, when such genius, directed by such intentions, failed of their purposed effect. St. Augustin's conversion to orthodoxy by St. Ambrose, was however the most desirable of all triumphs to the church, which now displayed that influence and eldership over the state which its great ruler willingly submitted to. Some new but necessary tax had been imposed; the populace enraged, threw down the Emperor's statues, insulted his officers, and manifested a disposition towards resistance, totally new to the world, which may be observed then *first* to have put forth the more than half invisible germ, encouraged by mildness in the sovereign power. Theodosius sent forces to punish the insurgents; but Flavian, their gentle bishop, interposed, and saved them from the threatened resentment. Fresh offence of the same nature was, in seven years after this indulgence, given by the people of Thessalonica, who finding resistance permitted at Antioch, resolved to push the same principles up to rebellion in *their* city, where in a popular tumult they killed their governor, and, if I remember right, fired his house, with other acts of unexampled insolence. Imperial dignity would brook no more, and Theodosius, in the spirit of his predecessors, permitted a massacre of the guilty town-folk by his soldiery.

St.

St. Ambrose justly alarmed at so much bloodshed, censured the indignant Emperor from his pulpit, whence he admonished him of the wide difference between a Christian and a Pagan spirit; and fearless in the cause of true religion, inculcated the doctrine of forgiveness, declaring the cruelties lately performed criminal, without palliation or softening. Such truths affected the generous bosom of the sovereign, such conduct inspired respect towards the prelate, inclining the prince to condemnation of his own behaviour. That his repentance might be public he wore mourning eight months; and when the *double* quarantine was over, he was admitted as a penitent to the communion. That compensation might be made for that rash storm of anger in which no fewer than seven thousand people perished, a law was made, irrevocable from that day, that no execution should again take place, till four weeks after sentence was pronounced. Thus had the world long cause to bless the church, which for the noblest of all human purposes controll'd the kingly power. That monarch too, who being set by heaven high above all apprehension of sublunary punishment, submitted his imperial state to censure of a subject, and humbled his greatness before the throne of God. That Theodosius should perform a moral act equal to this religious one is less surprising: he set Valentinian (second of the name) upon the throne of the West, from motives of mere moderation; and to revenge his death, faced with heroic courage the rebel captains Eugenius and Arbogastes, whom he defeated by superior knowledge in the arts of war; for rebels were no new phenomena; but they were individual chiefs who stood in opposition each to other, and led th' imbattled multitudes along to perish in their cause. Till Theodosius's reign, an insurrection without a leader is not heard of; 'twas a non-descript in history or politicks; but experience has since made us acquainted with the beast. And now Alaric and Rhadagistus, who had been tearing each other to pieces during the life-time of this last sovereign, watched the moment of his death to fall on the deserted world, and fright his despicable successors.

successors. Of these poor creatures, the eldest Arcadius, found a traitor in the man who should have served him, one Ruffinus, who leagued with Alaric, but lost the reward of treachery; he died, and weak Honorius endeavoured to secure his western division of imperial power by wedding the daughter of victorious Stilicho, who had killed 10,000 Goths under Fiesole, and was a character of energy enough, but could not resist the temptation of endeavouring to obtain the empire for himself, which he defended with so much activity. Meanwhile, Cedrenus says, the olympiads ceased in Greece; new customs, new terrors overwhelmed mankind; new nations over-ran it, and nothing proceeded forwards with any appearance of regularity, except church establishments. St. Jerome translated the Bible into what is called the Vulgate version, about the time we speak of; Pope Anastasius commanded the gospel to be heard standing, and the third council of Carthage decreed, that the eucharist should be received fasting—two good usages, and as yet complied with both by Romanists and Lutherans. Stilicho burned the Sybil's books, on which, says Mr. Murphy, in a note on Tacitus, paganism groaned and expired. One wishes however, that the mystical acrostic of Erythræa had been spared, which began every line with the next letter of our Saviour's name, and while she prophesied his birth, formed the words JESUS CHRIST.

Ausonius lived in these days or near them; he was a Frenchman, born at Bourdeaux, then Burdigala, but of Roman parents; his nativity cast by Arborius early in life, determined possibly his future studies. The grandfather was persuaded he *must* be a poet, and a poet he became.

Judicial astrology was believed in by all ranks through the fifth century, men seem as if they *would always* take unlicensed peeps behind the curtain of futurity; the Delphic oracle and Dodonæan grove were silenced—and as the east was the true seat of empire, oriental magic arts succeeded to Pythian imposture and ambiguity. But *Retrospection*

trospæction must be turned unwillingly towards the uxorious prince and trifling boy that swayed the world's great sceptre ; for whilst Rome's danger from the Goths drew near, and Stilicho with all his active genius could but procure a momentary armistice, Honorius having sought inglorious shelter among the deep morasses of Ravenna, built him a terrace there and aviary ; and equally incapable of virtue or of vice, fed his favourite birds, dogs and poultry, in quiet, an unconcerned hearer of all that past. Arcadius, yet more conscious than the brother of his own small powers to fill up his station, committed his infant son to care of Isdigerdes, the Persian prince, for education ; and put himself under tuition of Eutropius, the first eunuch on record, who arrived at the patrician and consular dignity, and who headed the armies of now degenerate Rome. For though the hero that opposed the rush of Gothick fury seemed to revive some hope from martial ardour ; while his panegyrist shewed the fire of wit in epigram and mythologick verse, not yet extinguished, it was a paper flame, and plainly by its short and sudden blaze betrayed th'expiring taper's end, fast following to utter abolition. Stilicho fed his ready-kindling heat with the coarse nutriment of personal interest, and desire of empire for his own worthless son, instead of his old master's Theodosius : he too was disappointed in his aim by death—but the bold Eunuch now came forward, and in his consulship enacted a law against protection of civil offences by sanctuary. St. Chrysostome, for this insult against church power, refused him the communion ; and with a zeal less regular than rapid, reproached the daring favourite from the altar. In two years time his own excesses having armed some injured hand against him, this Eutropius flew to the shelter he had himself denied, and from the church was dragged away to suffer ; but Socrates, a Greek writer of the fifth century, says that St. Chrysostome's true charity rescued the wretched life, forfeit to his own law, and sent him safe into perpetual banishment. The word *masse* was now first introduced into ecclesiastical ordinances ; we know not if it meant

oblation from the Hebrew *missach*, or from *missa* and *demissa*—mere *finish* or *dismissal*. The Pelagian heresy meanwhile never dismissed, now raged with exceeding violence. It was first founded by Pelagius, a monk, born in Armorica, or Little Britain—the province of Bretagne, in France, and consisted chiefly in the denial of original sin, and of there being any necessity for the grace of God, supposing man wholly sufficient to his own salvation.

This Pelagius was a Welchman, Howell says, and his name Morgan; he was called Pelagius, à *Pelago*; he was born by the sea-side. There were four kings of that province named Howell, and one of them was called Howell the Great. They all derived from Adrian, whose family name was *Ælia*, say the letters *Hoælianæ*. But we return to Arcadius and Honorius, who were compared by Gibbon at the end of his third volume, fourth edition, to the kings of France and Spain, who, he said truly enough, slumbered upon their thrones. Louis XVI. lamented the insult; and our historian good-naturedly declared in his memoirs, that the offensive passage was penned before he came to the crown—so it might, and yet be intended for him ne'er the less. He was dauphin, he was uxorious, and apparently conscious of his own small strength to hold in a headstrong people, irritated, although pampered by his predecessors. The sons of Theodosius, degenerate as they were, had nothing to fear from their own subjects' aversion; but Sueves, Goths, Huns, and Vandals, kept pouring forward in repeated torrents from the same populous regions, whence had rushed the Cimbri and Teutons, repelled by Marius five hundred years before. What is most observable in this fresh swarm of them, is the term Chagan or Khan, given to their leader. The word is yet familiar to us in Tartar annals, if such they may be called.

Teutons have not forgotten their early designation: I bought a map at Lintz in Germany—the corner calls it *Teutcht* land, and the people exhorted me in vain to study *Teutsch*, now by corrupt and close pronunciation become *Dutch*—of course divided into high Dutch and low;

low; the languages of Holland and of Germany. *Teuton* however, though an early appellative, was not the original one. *Titans* they were, *spreading o'er many a rood*, and thought for that reason in early days *gigantic*. *Tūd* earth, and *tan* spreading, are words yet understood on Mona, where they resided as I may say metropolitarily. They are still Cimbri, Cambrians *there*; Cymri, (pronounce *Coom*, Gomeri) perhaps from the son of Japhet, the Jâpetus of history and fable. *Coom* means a valley in the Saxon language. Our ancestor chose the vales possibly for residence; he was a lowlander likely enough. But my readers would rather get forwards with the story, and see tremendous Alaric return and blockade the city of Rome, then filled, as Gibbon and Nardini think, with about 1,200,000 souls, not more than London at the present day, nor very, *very* much richer, I should suppose; only that their wealth, as still obtains in Italy, was concentrated in churches, palaces, and senatorial residences; unlike to ours, which from the nature of our government is all diffused, scattering its comforts upon common life. The savage prince who sacked it afterwards, once raised the siege for 5,000 pounds weight of gold, and 30,000 pounds weight of silver, to which other articles of luxury were added, that bear in different times a different price; and famine had so wasted the inhabitants, their deaths by hunger caused a dreadful plague—on hearing which the fierce barbarian retired a while, observing he was sorry for that pestilence, as *thick grass was easier cut than thin*. During the dreadful scarcity preceding it, must be remembered the charity of Læta, widow of Gratian, who bestowed three parts of her princely revenue to feed the poor, and deserved better fate than death at last by hunger. Serena too was strangled by the populace, who hoped to appease the treacherous Alaric by murdering the favourite wife of his ally, brave Stilicho, who had before this been assassinated for his intention to usurp the diadem. Serena was a second comfort to the General, not mother to the Empress *Mary* first we read of—*she*, as her name implies, stretched out her neck with fortitude to meet the blow,

and follow, as she said, her warlike husband. But women now press forward on our notice: little is said of them during the prosperity of ancient Rome, where they were considered merely as appendages to greatness, or necessities of domestic life, or at most as toys of pleasure for the men: but constant nature will preserve her level; and as one half the human race grew weaker, the other half appeared to strengthen in proportion. Eudocia, Proba, Falconia, now wrote verses, or at least compiled verses already written, and tacking them into centos, obtained admiration for their wit—whilst Hippacia taught the mathematics publicly in the schools of Alexandria, after the death of her father Theon; for improvements in mechanism flourish as philosophy decays, and tottering science clings close to demonstration. Hydraulic organs had been long in use, supplying the place of manual exertions in music, whence taste and feeling were of course precluded; and polygraphic pictures helped to extinguish the painter's art. Laziness is a certain symptom of ill health to any and to every state: and Ammianus Marcellinus had, though himself a Syrian, reproached the Romans before this period for being contented with having their game driven into toils for them to catch more easily, chace being become too great a fatigue. The kings of Spain and Naples hunted just so in the year 1785; for though there has been much fluctuation in our globe, there has been but little change. Italian ideas of justice fifteen years ago, were exactly like those the satirical historian describes in his own time, when, says he, Should a slave bring the warm water somewhat too cold to table, three hundred lashes on the back admonish him to shew more care for his fine master's nerves: should the same man commit a wilful murder, provided always it was on his *equal*—My Lord will say perhaps, He's a good fellow; but we will punish him if he is catch'd repeating such offences. That similar opinions prevailed at Milan A. D. 1786, I had myself opportunity to observe. Two persons there were committed for examination; one had killed his fellow-servant in cold blood, the other was seen breaking some new lamps
lately

lately set up to illuminate the streets and square. I hope, said I, the assassin will be hanged.—I had rather see the other hanged, replied a friend in company, for the first only stabbed his companion out of revenge, poor fellow ! whereas the wicked creature who broke our pretty lamps, did it, I'm persuaded, only to 'spite the Archduke. To rectify the Roman notions a merited and dreadful chastisement was at hand. Let the Milanese determine if one much less severe was hurled upon their haughty nobles by Bonaparte, than when stern Alaric, bought off to temporary removal of his forces, returned again before their gates for plunder ; and as he had on his last visit demanded all their property, they now, in a debate for peace, inquired not how much he would take, but what he'd leave them.—*Their lives perhaps*, replied the rough barbarian, and press'd more closely round Aurelian's wall ; which, far too wide for their shrunk forces to defend, gave way ; and saw the city it had once scarcely surrounded, given up a helpless prey to ignorance and grossness ; to Gothick greediness of immediate gain, and wanton delight in unnecessary destruction. Amidst this shock of contending passions grief and rage, Christianity, and Christianity alone, survived. The soldiers who respected neither rank nor age, looked on the church with reverence, and forbore to touch whatever had been there deposited. The sacking of the town lasted three days, and in that time innumerable were the precious monuments of science that sunk beneath the victor's fury : much was yet left for future pillagers, who learned the road to riches from Alaric, while he contrived various though unsuccessful methods of carrying his spoils away to Africa, where, like a true savage, he had purposed to retire, and growl over his prey in solitude. The vessel they embarked in was however still driven back by storms, till over-laded with extortion, down she sunk ; and the now disappointed conqueror, who had refused granting ought but life to those who had once employed him in their defence (when Stilicho paid him as a subsidized ally), left his own shipwreckt corpse at last upon the sea-beat shore of Calabria.

Thus

Thus unlamented pass the proud away,
 The gaze of fools, and pageant of a day :
 So perish all whose breast ne'er learn'd to glow
 At other's good, or feel for other's woe.

POPE.

So perished arts and elegancies and knowledge ! Crevier says hastily there was no Roman orator after Pliny, no historian after Tacitus, and no poet after Juvenal ; he might as well have said there was no emperor after Marcus Aurelius. Crevier says well however, that to polite literature succeeded empty and disputatious theology ; and that for love of such subtleties barbarism was contented to drive taste and convenience, and common sense quite away—

A second deluge learning next o'er-run,
 While the Monks finish'd what the Goths begun.

Athaulphus now (*Adolphus* in our closer pronunciation) ruled over the Visigoths, and wisely fixed his seat at warm Thoulouse ; while Britain, now denied assistance from the Romans, suffered incredibly from barbarous invaders, and kept the Christian faith alive in the land, almost as we may say, by miracle. Caerleon was even then an archbishoprick, with suffragans : these, when they went to council at Avranches (*Araufium* then 'twas called) and Arles and Nice ; had honour paid them there, and took precedence. For 'spite of force, and fraud and folly, the church of Christ flourished in every clime : *that* stone not made with human hands, could never be dislodged by human power. Ignatius Auda with his hasty zeal would have undone all, had it been possible, when at the Persian city Ecbatana he threw the old pyraeum down and trampled on it, an insult that Warranes was not likely to forgive ; and 'twas no time to force the empire upon wars, when every battle tended to dismember it. But ecclesiastical affairs alone attract our *retrospective* eye, which turns disgusted from the names of Maximus, Jovinus, Asper and John, of whom some forgot the world, and others were forgotten by it ; while Valentinian III. is best remembered
 by

by his worthlessness and ill-timed triumph over the violated virtue of his brave general's wife. It is indeed much more remarkable, for tyrants were no phænomena at Rome, that at the moment when Pharamond at Saleheim made the *salique* law to exclude females from the sovereignty of France, the astonished east saw the great sceptre of what had formerly been called *the whole world*, swayed by a virgin queen, sister to the son of weak Arcadius, Theodosius the younger; who, bred at Isdigerdes' court, and of a flexible and tender nature, willingly sunk his own renown in her's, received *correction* at her hands, and even submitted to accept a wife, the lovely Athenais, by her choice; while he, sequester'd from all cares of state, sought only to improve his talents for theological speculations. The young Empress too after conversion, having received the name Eudocia, turned all her thoughts to pilgrimage and piety, and leaving Pulcheria in complete possession of all power, died in a voluntary exile from her fine palace at Constantinople, to a poor hut at Old Jerusalem, nearest the place where once was laid her Saviour.

Events clapt close together thus in an abridgment or short summary of historical occurrences, although the execution itself were good, wear by necessity on the first glimpse, a somewhat distorted appearance. The picture of truth rising up to meet the morning sun, as painted in the cieling of the Costaguti palace at Rome, is apt to revolt cursory observers, who I have seen turn away displeased with the foreshortened figure, till called back by the connoisseur who better knows to value useful labour. 'Tis thus my work begins to show already, and almost to repel me from performance. In a small field the figures scarcely can appear proportionate, and a moment's consideration must be allowed, that writer and reader both may be convinced, how all is in the inevitable state required by an epitome like this; and how the abrupt transition must be pardoned which brings us suddenly from scenes of culpable and frantick violence, to characters of voluntary feebleness and half unaccountable submission; from manners, loosened by a
gross

gross indulgence, till nature staggering sought relief in phrenzy; to modes of meagre melancholy existence, where we contemplate cold humanity parched by repeated penances to dumb forgetfulness and oblivious solitude; while cænobites and anchorites disputed the palm of willing misery with so much eagerness, that emperors and princes chiefly sought renown by practising severities on their own silly persons, and paid regard to others chiefly as they excelled in arts of self-tormenting. Syrus and Silentarius, which last was so absorbed in divine contemplations, that Baronius tells us he never had been *heard to speak at all*. Simon Stylites, so called from his *pillar*, carried away the palm of wretchedness however, living on the top of some tall column sixty feet high, Evagrius says, and drawing up his bread, his fruit, and his fresh water, like a tame goldfinch on a perch, for thirty years successively. The western climate, less favourable to such folly, tried at other. Our Welsh folks tell how one Siriolis, a Roman monk, lived upon Puffin Island, or Priestholme, opposite Penmaenmaur, twenty years; Leland says 'twas in 378, but most authors make him of later existence: it was a dreadful one all winter long. The tiny spot, almost of a circular form, consists of rock alone, yet bears the hermit's name still, *Siriol*; some screaming sea-gulls haunt it for three months; then leave the dashing waves to toss around and celebrate his self-created misery. The headlong Donatists meantime more troublesome, but not more lunatick than these, with their unnatural desire of dying, frightened and plagued the peaceful passengers; when meeting them they begged a blow or beating, with such inordinate and insupportable pertinacity, that they did now and then obtain their wish in desperate earnest from people who could not escape their importunities, nor keep their own passions under just controul; and had not St. Augustine, with every argument of reason, supported by learning, opposed the wild fanaticks, their frantick zeal would longer have disgraced Christianity. That great author having tried all he could to confute by his books, *de civitate Dei*, the numerous sects of polytheists, who all united in supposing Rome's calamities

mities to have been caused by the neglect of heathen worship, and the offences given to heathen gods : next turned his strength and skill to weed the errors from our own religion, and pluck away the thorns of separation which, hourly starting up under fresh names, distressed but never wearied this champion of our church. The monster-tamers of fabulous antiquity were but the types of these no less heroical and useful civilizers of the newly redeemed, as *they* were of the new created world. Cadmus and Hercules who sow'd the warrior seed, saved long-devoted souls from hell ; and hapless in his likeness Orpheus, who fell a victim to female resentment, as did St. Chrysostome, dying in exile by the bitterness of Eudoxia's implacable and unforgiving spirit. About that time too, an æra pregnant with fanaticism, the Jews, misled to think the end of all was come, and that old Ocean would be dried before them, made an enumeration of their tribes collected from a variety of countries into the Isle of Candia, and there, under command of a false Moses, rushed, like the herd of swine possessed by dæmons, into the sea, where sunk the impostor and his stupid followers. Meanwhile the Empress Pulcheria sought an associate in those cares of state from which her pious brother was abstracted, and pitched on Marcian, a young Roman soldier, whom Genferic the Goth found sleeping under a tree, an eagle perched above him : he was a gallant warrior, worthy of being born when history was faithful to desert, and of an appearance so strikingly advantageous, that the rough chieftain who surprised him in the hour of repose, resolved to extort from so symmetrical a creature, an oath that he would never be his enemy, remaining persuaded by his form alone, that beauteous Marcian was the care of heaven. Such too were apparently the lady's sentiments ; in defiance of which, she bound herself by vows of chastity ; and though she *wedded* her associate, *never broke them* ; but the imperial votress passed on

In maiden meditation—fancy free.

Of Roman characters however, and Roman names, as of old Roman manners, take we leave, and bid a long adieu to the past sounds of

Caius and Lucius, Titus and Sempronius; now ill exchanged for Alaric and Attalus, Hunneric and Genferic, who laid commercial Carthage in a ruin, destroyed the triple geryon of the isles Majorca, Minorca, and Yvica, and fixed his Vandals in their favourite spot, calling the province after them V'Andalusia: the word we see has lost only one letter yet. The Alans and *Catti* seized upon that district called from their seizure of it, *Catalonia*; and these enjoyed the beautiful rich vineyards planted by the Emperor Probus long before; when in some interval of Gaulish conquests, he set his soldiers to adorn the place subdued. Unlike to him rude Genferic rushed forward, and ravaged helpless Rome of all that Alaric had spared. Implacable and fierce, his soldiers mercilessly destroyed all public and all private property; nor sex nor age, nor rank, nor even religion protected ought from his rapacious hand: for fourteen days these horrid scenes continued, while Gunderic profaned the church at Seville, birth-place of immortal Trajan; a town whose first foundations were coeval with Lacedæmon, the *Sparta* of historians, the *Sarepta* of the scriptures. *Sevilla la vieja* still 'tis called by those who say, and justly,

Qui no hà vista a Sevilla,
No hà vista meravilla.

Juan Vassæus, in his *Hispania Illustrata*, tells us that the sacrilege was in the very spot visibly punished by visitation of God on hostile Gun-
deric. But all these names give place to Attila, son of Mundizuchus, grandson to Nimrod the Great, King of Huns, Medes, Goths, Danes, the terror of the world, and scourge of God. He, like another Romulus, at first shared government and possessions with a brother, whom like him he murder'd, changing the city's name he built, that so poor Bledt might be no more remember'd. A neat-herd too, we're told, found a rich sword under the earth when ploughing, and presented it to Attila, who in the spirit of the times exclaimed, that 'twas the very sword worn by Mars, and with it he would conquer all the world. From this ferocious founder of new empires, the oldest of the Roman families

families fled for refuge to the Adriatick Sea, and as the conqueror's boast was, that no grafs grew where he turned his steed, expiring freedom fought another element, and like a sylvan stag hunted from earth,

Takes the deep foil, and plunges in the wave
Precipitant ; where on some sandy isle
Sure anchorage he finds, and skulks immers'd.

The flatterer of Theodoric, Cassiodorus, calls the retreat of these self-exiled nobles a flight of water fowl ; be it so : they spread their halcyon wings over the billows, and proved a presage of some happy hours, when science seeking shelter in retirement, true liberty might breathe in peace and safety, carrying with them their old country's favourite form of government, and justly sick of emperors and kings, they in a few years fixed a lasting aristocracy, and were, as Shakespear calls them,

The toged counsellors of Venice.

There are who say the word Venetia derives from Heneti, an Asiatick people led up to these lagoons by old Antenor after the siege of Troy ; but that ground sinks under the antiquary's spade ; and Mr. Bryant has shaken the foundation cruelly by saying, (for ought I know) by *proving* that there was never any siege of Troy at all : there was a port called Venetus however, from time quite immemorial. While this new town, rising in beauty from her clustering isles, seemed to inlay the bosom of the deep, hapless Britannia devoured by Picts and Scots, and shoals of Saxons too, which never again quitted the country they set foot in, sent out their well-known melancholy message to Ætius thrice consul, the groans of the Britons : nor was the dismal answer less impressive ; that distant colonies could have no help, while the metropolis herself subsisted but by permission of those northern nations who were expected hourly at her gates. It must be mentioned likewise how in Africa the Vandals were renewing all that Paganism could have inflicted on Christianity : Numidia had been bestowed on these wild

creatures, fierce as its aborigines, wolves, leopards, panthers;* and 'twas at that time that they tore in pieces that once well civilized Roman province. It was the age of general invasion, and Attila, proud of his style and title, did terrify the world which shook before him; and was in very deed the scourge of God. Epidaurum in Illyria, supposed by Scaliger to have been built two thousand years before, was now spoil'd by the Goths; when 'twas repaired the name was called Ragusa. But above all the siege of Aquileia affords a theme for bitter exclamation. While that unhappy city suffer'd sorrows incredible, and a distress unequal'd but by that of Jerusalem, Theodosius sent the victor 6000 lb. weight of gold, a promise too from worthless and tyrannick Valentinian, of annual tribute value 1000 lb. weight of the same precious metal, would he but spare the capital. Attila laughed, but took the spoils of empire, whose strange fall having produced a temporary chaos, shews to the *retrospective* eye how the church strengthened as the state decayed, and grave authority slid almost unperceived from the stretched diadem, to the close-clasping, high-aspiring mitre.

Whilst Attila then, striding o'er ravaged provinces, advanced to Rome, upon his way the guardian of the holy see opposed him, great Saint Leo; not with such armour as the fierce barbarian was well acquainted with, and of which he best could know the force, and all the force: but with a peaceful air of firm assurance, and trust in celestial aid; with pious, and men may call them enthusiastick threatenings, which so impressed the headstrong conqueror, that he turned suddenly about we're told, with a face fuller of alarm and agitation, at the strange thought of seeing the apostles Peter and Paul come flying

* This Numidia was then the granary of the world; but so was it wasted by Vandal fury, tearing vines and fruit trees, and devouring the green corn, &c. leaving cities without *one inhabitant*, and suffering no country to escape their hostile rage, that 30,000 invaders completely finished the whole province. It is now, and has been ever since, nearly *a desert*; or only inhabited near the shores by pirates and banditti.

in the air to Rome's relief,* than all her troops could ever have produced, had they been general'd by Cæsar's self. Raphael has so designed this picture in the Vatican, that none can miss an accidental strong resemblance between the present pope Pius the sixth, and Leo primus, so truly termed the Great. Milan and Florence then endured the shock of Gothick fury, but Attila went back, however fullenly—back to his native Scythia; where, at his marriage with fair Ildico, he drank so freely of the nuptial bowl, that in the night he was found suffocated.* The wretched woman's dangerous situation, reminds one of the monk who was found locked in the study, when our Charles the second, during their talk together, fell in an apoplectick fit: to *his* innocence the monarch lived to bear a melancholy, but honourable testimony. Poor Ildico was torn to pieces between four wild horses.

* As Attila was frightened from Rome by the idea of St. Peter and St. Paul defending it, so Zosimus says, was Alaric long before driven from Athens, by thinking he saw Achilles shaking his spear at him from the walls.

† Attila's nuptial bowl was hydromel; wine was a liquor not known in the north, nor easily obtained. From the Ghaëlic custom of drinking a beverage made with honey for thirty days feast after a grand wedding, comes the expression of the *honey-moon*; 'tis a Teutonic phrase, you have it not in the warm wine latitudes. Talieffin tells of this inspiring cup; *confector mulsi*, the confectioner of the emulsion, was I believe, a great officer of state in Wales, ranking with master of the horse, and the king's bard. From Howel Ddha's laws, and our Saxon annals, much of this knowledge may be drawn; I quote only from quotation or memory. Mead however is still drank in *our* country, and I never tasted it in any other, except one evening some in Polish Prussia.

C H A P. VIII.

FROM THE DEATH OF ATTLA TO A. D. 500.

WHILE Goths and Vandals wasted a willing world, that scarcely made resistance to their power, pleased *Retrospection* rests a little moment upon the virtues of the priestly character. Sixtus the third, immediate predecessor to St. Leo, had been accused by Bassius or Bassianus, and accused falsely, of a mortal sin; from which the synod cleared their worthy primate, condemning his accuser, and sentencing him to perpetual exile for the calumny. The gentle Pontiff begged remittance of so harsh a punishment, and when his enemy died of a broken heart, buried him with his own hands. This man had learned the hardest precept of our meek religion; he knew how to love, and to forgive a foe. The institution of St. Peter *ad vincula* is given to him. The Empress Eudocia sent from Jerusalem to Rome, something which she was willing to believe were the true bonds dropt from St. Peter's arm, when the releasing angel drew him from prison. 'Twas natural that something should be done to keep alive the memory both of the saint and of the lady, and in those days 'twould have been difficult not to have done too much. This seems to be the first striking act of devotion towards St. Peter, at least it is the first that strikes *me*: scholars must correct such mistakes when they meet them: the correction of a scholar is an honour, not disgrace. Meanwhile a strange imposture took up that attention which had been better paid to truth and virtue, yet 'twas not to be called imposture either, for there seemed no intention to deceive. The Emperor of the East, about the year 450, when Attila was employed in besieging Aquileia,

Aquileia, and Rome was running hastily to beg retreat in Venice, heard with more interest a curious story, how seven men had been seen wandering about the streets of Ephesus, dressed in strange dresses, and speaking an obsolete, almost an unintelligible language. On more enquiry, coins of the Emperor Decius were produced, said to have been presented by these men for food, which had no good effect on them however, for they returned into a cave near to the town and died, and there were buried. Theodosius, delighting in a tale like this, soon went to see the bodies, and persuaded himself that these seven people had slept there for two hundred years; in that lone hollow place, whither he thought they must have run to hide themselves from the hot persecution in Decius's reign; and Leo the Great, justly so called too, complying with the Emperor's fancy, canonized them as saints,* because of their apparently miraculous preservation; although we must confess that never mortal could attain that honour by a less hazardous or painful conduct than that of sleeping for so many years; but to the deification of paganism now succeeded the canonizations of popery, for men would have an *apotheosis*. Besides, that in every strange thing there is some odd appropriation of character to make it the more easily endured. These sleepers would not have been cared about, by Hanno and Hacko, Vortigern and Rowena, had *they* been ever so much disposed to superstition: there has always existed an obscure credit, or rather a degree of voluntary submission to the possibility of these suspensions *in the east*. Addison and Steele have noticed one or two, of which the most elegant advantage has

* The dog who followed these men was deemed holy all over the east, and in Sir Paul Rycaut's time, who mentions him, was held sacred by *Turks*, and considered as forming a venerable triumvirate with the ass ridden by Jesus Christ, and the camel who carried Mahomet in the Hegira.—*Note*, That whatever camel carries the Alcoran in procession, is made happy here on earth, dismissed from all employment, with this speech, Live long and merry under protection of the celestial camel thy brother, who carried the prophet Mahomet.

been taken; and Mrs. Sheridan's *Nourjahad* improves upon them all. Poor England now (while these saints slept and waked) was become quite a prey to her auxiliaries, the Saxon chiefs, whom she had called to help her against the fierce barbarians who drove her people to the sea, while that rough element still drove them back again on the barbarians. Those who came last however were most welcome; they resolved never to leave a land they liked so well, and soon incorporated themselves with the subdued inhabitants, who quietly submitted to their tyranny, and learned their language. English is still called Saxon by the small remnant of the old inhabitants, the Welch, as we must now begin to call them. *Dim safneg*, we speak no Saxon tongue, is still the language of our Ordevices in the year 1796; these, chusing freedom on their barren soil rather than servitude on the green banks of the Thames, flew to their yet half inaccessible mountains, where, building upon every rock a castle, and almost upon every hill a fort, they made at last their utmost stand, and found their final refuge in old Mona; where settling the prince's seat at Aberfraw, they wept the hasty and too fierce revenge taken by his indignant countrymen on hapless Vortigern, who, soothed by silly hopes of fair Rowena, made friendship with the faithless Saxons, and lost his honour and his life at Nant yr Gwerthyn, in Caernarvonshire, a place named Gwerthyn from a British leader—in English, Ironsides. In Anglesey these refuged few retained the Christian faith, as they still boast, pure from all innovation many years. Tertullian had said long before that they were among the first to receive Christianity. *Britannorum loca Romanis inaccessa Christo, vero subdita*. That among us the Christian doctrines anticipated the Roman sword, a cloud of witnesses do certainly attest; so much swifter were the dove's wings, carrying joyful tidings of peace on earth, good will towards men; than were those of the eagle, who brought both war and desolation in his train. St. Patrick, when the dreadful siege of Aquileia frightened the Romans from their capital, and sent the most part of the fugitives to beg asylum with

with the wise Venetians, scorned all idea of sheltering himself in the salt court of Amphitrite, and sought a place where he might *do* some good as well as *find* it. He came to Ireland where Gwillamore reigned king, and there converted the inhabitants to Christianity—he was a noble man as we believe, a *holy patrician*, who, in consequence of a religious vow, wandered from home when the Goths plundered Italy, having sworn to make proselytes wherever he should be received with hospitality. Ierne's humid coast is still super-eminent for that old fashioned but respectable virtue. She entertained, and still reveres his merit, and the *Sanctus Patritianus* became *Saint Patrick* by an easy corruption. He built a church on Anglesey, *opposite* Ireland, on the sea shore; the town and parish is called *Llan Badrick* now: but when possessed of the confiding hearts of his new converts in our sister kingdom, her best historians say he burned three hundred volumes of heroic songs, written by their *bards*; I fear he thought them poisonous as the serpents. They had been held in high and just estimation, wearing a robe of royal colour—it was not purple though, but green I think; our Welch protected their's for ages after. *Trer Beird*, the habitation of the Bards, may yet be seen at Llanidan, and *Bardsey* Island is even now covered with itinerant fingers. Tale-telling, however, kept its ground in Ireland in spite of St. Patrick, and that he could not chase all poetry away—witness, my old familiar friends, Murphy and Goldsmith; but we are engaged in works of *Retrospection*.

When thus the church of Rome had, by the interference of St. Leo, deferred for a short time the ruin of the state, and freed its wretched Emperor from fears of present destruction, he might perhaps have held the sceptre still, but vice, still more than Genferic or Attila, contributed to shake the feeble nerves of wicked Valentinian, who yet ruled the west, (if we may call him ruler who never unsheathed sword except to stab his own heroick General at a feast); and although Marcian dreamed that the great Gothick bow was broken, on that same night excess had in reality ruptured the heart-strings of the chief who drew

it ; he had no power to lend his assistance, for death fulfilled the oath he took to Genferic ; Marcian, the last of Roman warriors died ; a short but nominal succession of princes, most of them unworthy of their situation, though that was bad enough, disgraced even this last shading off of the now faded purple, which Majoranus only wore with dignity, and wore but a short time. Valentinian was not assassinated till in the thirtieth year of his reign ; but Majoranus ruled but *three*, and after many a useless victory won with hard toil, and celebrated with much elaboration, few traces yet remain of his renown, or that of his panegyrist, Sidonius Apollinaris. The acts of many Roman emperors, collected by Zosimus, are chiefly lost too, the French translated what was left of it ; Possidius Afer, better known perhaps by name of Possidonius, gave the world a life of St. Augustine twenty years before ; and Philostorgius fulminated his thunders at the reputation of St. Athanasius : we must recollect however that he wrote against Porphyry. Orion of Thebes composed collections of wise sentences, and dedicated them to Eudocia, Valentinian's empress ; but little can be gleaned from these dull days to gratify a classic reader either in wit or history. What strikes one most in this fifth act of Rome's amazing drama, is the growing ascendancy of her priesthood, conspicuous on the inauguration of Anthemius crowned by Pope Leo, and accepting the western empire as his gift, styling him *Dominus et Pater*. When that unhappy prince was killed by Ricimer, the same Pontiff anointed, with more ceremony than hope of good success, the young Olybrius, who held his seat about three months, I think, having been tempted by Genferic into a fatal war. He married Placidia daughter to Valentinian, by Genferic's consent ; for the Goths now endured a Roman on the throne while they were settling their own concerns, and trying to drive Leo I. a Thracian monarch, from Constantinople. But now Severus, the assassin of that last pleasing character we read of, Majoranus, being himself poisoned, our attention is arrested chiefly by the great fire at Constantinople which burned

200,000

200,000 volumes, among which was a Homer, which Cedrenus says was written in letters in gold; but Basiliscus, Zeno, and another Leo, son to the first, disputed for the purple with such fury upon the banks of the Propontis, that Remismund and Hilderoc had but to look on while the Greek emperors injured their own dominions. Theodoric now king of the Visigoths completed the expulsion of the Roman arms from Spain, which they had held a tributary province for above seven hundred years, till Torrismond drove out the last of them, and then they even *requested* Theodoric to take and keep that kingdom for himself. He extended his kindness by perpetual extension of his dominions so acquired in old Celtiberia, whence Euric had driven the Catholics with violence, raising high quicksets round each place of worship, as I can with difficulty understand from Mariana, who says he kept them safe *with thorns*. Julius Nepos, made Cæsar by Olybrius, or Glicerius whom the Goths permitted to rule at Ravenna, deposed the last of these, and set up for himself: but Orestes, king of the Heruli, approved not his independent spirit; opposing his pretensions with a formidable army, Julius fled to Placentia, and there lost his life. The exploits of Odoacer, late 'squire to Orestes, now claim our *retrospective* glance. He, though a transient, was a shining light, doomed to absorb and swallow up the western empire in his blaze. That immense power then, founded in *Romulus*, and after seven hundred and sixty-six years receiving as it were new birth and a fixed seat under the great *Augustus*, ended in a voluntary abdication of the man who, by a curious combination of circumstances, possessed *both their names*: and we observe *Augustulus Romulus*, last of the Roman emperors, quietly yielding up his no longer tenable dignity to the Scythian hero, four hundred and eighty years after the birth of Christ, five hundred and twenty-four years after the battle of Pharsalia, and very near one hundred and fifty years after the removal of the imperial residence to Byzantium.

The very name of Rome was now lost to its conqueror, who sacked

and left it to fight the last decisive battle with Genferic, whom he defeated and killed ; and like a wise man, despising all style and empty title but the true ones, he flung aside the unimpressive ornaments of the no longer revered emperors and imperators, calling himself King of Italy, the country he subdued : out of which tract of land he chose Ravenna for his court and residence, as best provided with natural defences, the strong fortification of a marshy ground ; whilst *Augustulus Romulus*,* wretched proprietor of the two first names on earth, ended his tranquil existence in a half-forced half-voluntary confinement to the demesne of Lucullus's villa, not far from Naples—an interesting spot, still shewn to travellers as the dwelling of rough Marius once, and once of gay Lucullus. Yet so were the Roman emperors faded to a phantom before the Gothick chieftains fixed in Italy, that scarce any one ever recollects its *last* illustrious inhabitant, or even bestows a passing sigh upon its inoffensive prisoner, seldom presented either by historians or even by walking guides, to the eye of general or particular *Retrospection*. If we would follow this sun till it sets completely, it will be necessary to watch the gradual and gentle decay of light and heat dispensed from Constantinople, where Zeno, at the time under reviewal, ruled the east ; and received with just indignation the offer of the once conscript fathers to chuse a master for them himself, or to confirm the the *patrician* Odoacer in his dignity. The *order* had indeed been debased by the admission of Moors, Goths, every successful barbarian in his turn ; yet did the name of senate languish on, nor pass the limits of our *camera obscura* till after Leo IV. in 759 I think, who put a final end to it. But it had then scarce one true symptom of existence left, a mere half body and half corpse, of which the last weak sigh is scarce discernible to the tired and unfeeling attendants. One thousand two hundred and sixty years, or thereabouts,

* In the same manner Philip, son to Antiochus, in times long past, established the Macedonian monarchy, and Philip Antigoni lost it irrecoverably.

we may consider as the life of the Roman senate; who resigned to Zeno their last privilege, that of *appearing* to approve their own tyrants. But Zeno himself deserved nor rule nor power. Cruel and riotous, his wild excesses ended at length in epileptic or apoplectic fits; one of which held him so long that Ariadne, his unfaithful wife, desiring soon to wed his favourite Chamberlain, buried him hastily; nor regarded the cries which, when he waked, issued from the coffin; but heaped earth on him to drown his shrieks. That earth being removed some years after, it was discovered that the hapless prince had gnawed his own arms under ground from hunger, grief and rage. But the conversion of Clovis the Great, first Christian king of France, allures our *retrospective* eye: 'twas near the end of the fifth century when, in compliance to his Queen's request, this barbarous ruler of a pagan host renounced the superstition of his fathers, professing our purer faith. The bishop who baptized him had, we must own, but little care for treating him with delicacy, if it is certain that he used these words, "Come, now kneel down Sicambrian, and learn to worship what you are used to despise, and to despise what you are used to worship;" the phrase accompanied by a contemptuous casting away some images he wore about his person, late objects of his awkward adoration. Such anecdotes evince at once the needless roughness of the prelate, and the strange flexibility of mind joined to untutored manners in the catechumen.

'Twas now that bells were, among other ornaments and conveniencies, introduced into the church by Paulinus bishop of Nola in *Campania*; 'tis from the last word they are supposed to take their name. There were none known before his time at Rome, except the little tintinnabula. These were baptized formally, and blest, in Italy and Brabant, down to our own days; and I have half a notion, that since the Reformation, bells have been solemnly and seriously christened here in England. Two yet remain at Lincoln and at Oxford: their names are *Thomas*; I know not their age. Their uses are not ill summed up
in

in the old Latin distich written on some bell of great eminence, on *many* perhaps,

Laudo Deum verum, plebem voco, congreco clerum,
Defunctos ploro, pestem fugo, festa decoro.

The baptism of inanimate things seems strange to us, yet 'tis certain swords* underwent the ceremony. King Arthur's *excalibar* is famed in ballad story, though he lived not till the *sixth* century. Uther Pendragon was his father, and wore the dragon as a crest upon his *head*: pen signifies head in old British, now Welsh language. He was contemporary with Hengist and Horfa—both which words mean a horse, as I have been told, in different dialects of the Slavonian tongue: it may be so. The house of Hanover has that old impress on their coins and coat-armour still; and there are those who have suggested a possibility that the great pile of *Stonehenge*, in Wiltshire, was set up as a monument of commemoration of the victory won upon Salisbury plain over Aurelius Ambrose. Polydore Virgil lays the first stone of this explanation, and I believe there is a place yet called *Ambresbury* in the neighbourhood, which corroborates the notion. Neckham and Camden tell however, that many natives fancy those stones set up by Uther Pendragon himself, aided by his brother Merlin the conjuror and famous mathematician. Busy conjecture thus in our cold latitude fills up with fable and wonder those blank years, of which neat and connected accounts cannot be obtained: in like manner as the geographical maps and globes of about threescore or fourscore years back from the present day, were wont to have lions or elephants painted upon those spaces where little was known of cities, towns, and rivers. The effect was certain—the baby students fix'd attention there

* *This* is awkwardly expressed; swords were baptized before bells were: these last came in use about the year 468, but were not christened and solemnly consecrated till 970, when John XIV. (not the wicked John) baptized the fine new bell in the Lateran, and called it after *his own name*, which it still wears, with the above inscription.

Be this as it will, Hengist and Horfa laid the first stone of Leyden, celebrated for her learning ; but whose best praise is having, in these latter times, been Boerhaave's residence, whence he dispensed health, wisdom, and an example of patient cheerfulness under bodily distress, which can be followed only by a few. Ella too laid foundation of a kingdom called in our island that of the South Saxons, now the beautiful counties of Surry and Suffex. *Sac* an *facæ* were words expressive of that spirit of wandering which in those days possessed the northern nations, and, as I have heard, were synonymous to *winili* ; whoever travels Saxony at present will think upon a nearer derivation. The precious stones abounding in that district seem as if the Romans had denominated the place from *them*, *Saxa*. Carnelions, opals, onyxes are common, and some extremely fine jaspers and agates. That the phlogiston is liberally distributed, although the region be a cold one, is proved by that fine earth which forms the well-baked porcelain.

But the five hundredth year of our great Christian æra now approaches, so does the term of Odoacer's power. Theodoric, long a hostage at Constantinople, sent there in infancy as pledge of peace, by bold Theodomir his father, had been a thousand times excited by Leo, then emperor of the east, and afterwards by Zeno, to withstand incroachments from Orestes' squire. He, now returned to his own court, came forward with rapid strides ; and while the last named sovereign was buried living by his queen's haste to get another husband, Odoacer who refused not the challenge, went to meet him, was defeated terribly near Verona, and from thence, fled to his marshy refuge. Ravenna long resisted the conqueror's sword, which gained him Italy's wide surface and long extent from Piedmont to Calabria, yet could not make him happy or contented whilst his rival remained alive. The bishop of Ravenna offered his mediation, and drew up articles of peace which, although neither party could read, both were well pleased to sign ; so implicit was their confidence in ecclesiastical virtue, so deep their ignorance in all but the art of war. A gold plate
was

was prepared to strike the papers, and these chiefs who disputed the feat of Julius Cæsar and Marcus Aurelius, drew the style or pen, or implement whatever it was, through the word so marked, *and swore to it*. Their reconciliation was sealed by a banquet, they eat and drank together to excess; and the third day of this half savage half solemn feast, a sudden dagger stabbed the heart of brave and unsuspecting Odoacer. His Heruli, driven back to the flat countries between Milan and Turin, under the guidance of his only son, found those plains occupied by Lombard families, with whom they mixed, and lost their Scythian appellation: that of their chieftain, soften'd into the name *Udazio*, was fixed at Brescia in 1794; but our wand points to those days when Gildas was born, abbot of Banchor Isacoed: that place must not be confounded with the bishop's see, which lies in a different county; he was surnamed the Wise, and was considered by his countrymen as an oracle. Leonard Aretine too began his history, Coluthus, and Candidus Isaurus by their writings evinced the strange decay of style and spirit in authors, which unaccountably kept pace with the decline of empire; and the strange sickness that in a manner held down literature, and sunk her almost to deliquium, dates its commencement from these Gothick kings. Theodoric was often heard to say he hated learning, and condemned all schools: the boy who trembles at a rod, said he, will never make a man to shake a spear. The women then and priests, who only needed not to fight in battle, preserved alive the vestal fire of science, which often sinking to the socket's edge, threatened its total loss; yet glimmering on, in the sad sepulchre of general knowledge, waited a purer air, when its weak languid rays might try to expand, and cheer benighted man with its revival. But *Retrospection* now must fix her glass, for sight will hardly penetrate the gloom; upon the popes, not emperors of Rome: which city since, under another form, attracts and well deserves our notice of her conduct. Like the gallette or silk-worm, that strange town appeared at first upon the world's wide range, a small black speck, scarcely discernible; a
creature

creature next peculiar in its hunger, voracious and devouring every tree, soon stript by its predaceous habits, causing an artificial winter round. Laborious then, and studious to adorn its injured neighbours ; but soon weary with that employ, we see her next, torpid and dark, and dull and spiritless ; a fly at last, seeking alone to propagate itself, and to obtain possession for its progeny, in every soil which can afford them food.

Leo the Great, by whom two helpless princes were inaugurated, and one invading warrior driven back, was, if I am right, succeeded by Pope Hilary, born in Sardinia, who filled with warm ideas of that high independent spirit which finds an island its propitious soil, made the decree, and rendered it irrevocable, by which all future pontiffs should be hindered from naming their own successors ; he left the see elective. Till his time, ecclesiastical like civil power, seemed by consent of all mankind, transmissible by the command or dying breath of its possessor ; and care of souls, or empire of a universe, was given and accepted as a legacy. Breaking this link shewed men their chains were fragile, and the same liberal heart suggested that they might not be hinder'd from knowing their situation.

He was by no means of Theodoric's mind, he encouraged cultivation of literature in his clergy, and even insisted on their producing some proofs that they knew *something*, before he permitted them to take holy orders. Simplicius next succeeded to the papal chair, and wrote to Zeno, endeavouring to procure the banishment of hereticks, known by the name of Eutyches* their founder, who troubled greatly by their subtle reasonings the uniformity of that church which he was *chosen* to protect. Felix, from being cardinal, was next raised to the first ecclesiastical dignity. I recollect no pope before him who went through

* Of these Christians some yet remain in the world ; and it was to shew their rejection of Eutychian heresy that the very, *very* old painters represent our Saviour with *two* fingers elevated in act of benediction, expressing his *two* natures ; which *they* controverted. The three depressed fingers represent the Trinity.

that new appointed stage of preferment ; but veneration for martyrs naturally ended in profound reverence towards those whose business it had been once to bury them, and scarlet stockings, linings, &c. formerly badges of misery, and mere appendages to distress, were now become distinctions of honour, and gradations towards magnificence. The church had not as yet required celibacy from her members, and Felix, justly so called, was immediate and lineal, not collateral ancestor in the third degree to Gregory the Great. Gelasius upon his demise enjoyed supremacy over all his own clergy, and claimed it from the patriarch at Constantinople, but was refused. He made a decree to exclude lame and blind, &c. from the priesthood, he burned the Manichæan books, and banished those who had been hopelessly misled by them : but although he claimed, and persuaded many to think him possessed of infallibility, he tried, but was unable to abolish the lupercal, a gross institution of pagan origin, which Christian emperors had vainly endeavoured to annul, and 'twas Gelasius who distinguished canonical books of scripture from apocrypha. Meanwhile the *retrospective* eye will, in the days when Symmachus adorned the papal chair and chanted aloud the *gloria in excelsis*, observe the still blinded Jews collecting their civil and canon laws into a thalmud or repository,* regardless of the letter, but mindless of the spirit in which they were at first composed. Unobservant also, or strangely prepossessed against the true sense of those prophecies which long before had so minutely described their miserable state ; and promised future, though distant release from it ; a sure if late recall to their inheritance, from amongst all the nations they are scattered over ; a congregating of their tribes by a *greater* than Rabbi Affer. Since his appearance upon earth incarnate, and condemnation by these his infatuated, and every way peculiar people, five hundred years have now been in this little superficial work

* *Thalmud* means (as Sir William Jones tells us) people existing in *secret* excavations of rocks ; whence perhaps *thalmud*, a secret repository for their law : thus thalmud of Babylon.

slightly reviewed; and the twelve vultures seen by Romulus on his Capitoline Hill, have winged their destined flight twelve centuries with the addition of about half another, past since his first foundation of the city, to that melancholy but scarcely noticed day, when the last prince who ever bore his name, yielded that city tamely up to Odoacer; but if I remember well the augury, those vultures* wheeling round *pass'd him again*.

Rome while I write, has for twelve centuries more, and half another, ruled o'er her subject world *a second time*, and clothed in papal, as once in imperial purple, has *again* held in severe subjection princes, potentates, warriors.

But we return to *Retrospect*.

* And I do fancy these swans were the old vultures *whitened* by Virgil, as a compliment to Augustus.

—Ni fallor.

*Ni frustra augurium vani docuere parentes,
Aspice his senos lætantis agmine cynos
Ætheria quos labfa plaga Jovis ales aperto
Turbârat cælo; nunc terras ordine longo
Aut capere, aut captas jam despectare videntur.
Ut reduces illi ludunt stridentibus alis,
Et cætu cinxere polum, cantusque dedere:
Haud aliter, &c. &c.*

CHAP. IX.

TO THE EXPULSION OF THE GOTHICK KINGS.

FIRST PORTION OF THE SIXTH CENTURY.

WHILE Goths and Vandals, with devouring rage wasted the once well-cultivated Roman empire, so that scarce a trace of civilization remained either in Spain or Africa, our *retrospective* eye will be accounted happy in not having time to dwell upon such scenes as Procopius (no scrupulous historian) forbears to relate; lest from my book, says he, should in some future day be learned, lessons of yet unheard-of inhumanity: but 'tis agreed upon by all our writers, that no period of this globe's existence ever equalled, or even approached near to the fifth and sixth centuries, for complicated afflictions, and distress stopping little short of despair. Famine and pestilence followed the Gothick wars, of which indeed they were considered as instruments; when, if a garrison held out too long, the besiegers made no scruple to kill all their prisoners in cold blood, and piling them up in heaps—poison the wretched creatures of the town, and force them to desert it.

Authors persist in saying, and with truth, that every province under Roman protection was grown effeminate, and in some measure, we may say enervated, by the free commerce entertained with the capital, and thus fell unresistingly before the Barbarian troops: but before such troops Cæsar must have fallen. There was no art of war, no energy of mind, that could possibly withstand enemies who professed rapacity and murder, not contest; and who laughed at the feeble ties of honour and humanity. When Stilicho had taken some
Goths

Goths into his pay, hoping their assistance against invaders from other countries, not their own, what was the consequence? Only this; that adding treacherousness to ferocity, the brutal mercenaries turned all that skill and discipline they had learned, against the people who employed them: nor did their rage of devastation cease, till all their northern hive was drained of swarms, that migrated like myriads of ants in India, when the whole earth for miles appears to move; and while the lordly elephant is covered, incumbered, and even his bones picked by the black army, as 'tis emphatically called there, the gazelle or the kangaroo alone escape, by swiftness and light bounds.

Thrace, Hungary, France, Spain, Italy now, and Greece were gone, divided among these nations of new names, new manners, new ideas. A revolution was about to take place in men's minds, as well as in their government. Oriental customs had, since removal of the royal residence to Constantinople, infected the southern parts of Europe, but now the Septentrionists came forward, and brought with them other notions. A foldier and a freeman with *them* were synonymous; and none were counted base but such as were inactive. Women too had privileges not dreamed on in the east, where some princes, passionately addicted to the sex, began to take up these opinions, and release their female slaves from confinement. Cabades, who ruled in Persia, was of this mind: pleased with the respect paid to their domestic companions by the Germans, he gave more open licence to the ladies, and by that innovation, irritated such of his subjects as were attached to the old way; till rebellion became the natural effect, and Cabades was dethroned. Imprisonment of course followed degradation, but one of his women, who had early profited by these new regulations, made herself an object interesting to the gaoler, who could refuse nothing to such a soliciteess, and by her arts gained freedom for her indulgent sovereign. Dreadful was the revenge he took on all concerned, nor was his fury likely to spare Anastasius, ill surnamed *Decorus*, then emperor of the east, late chamberlain, now consort to
hasty

hasty and unfeeling Ariadne, who having buried one husband alive, exposed his successor to Cabades' resentment, by persuading him to refuse money requested by that prince, for purpose of reducing his tumultuous subjects to obedience. This he effected soon, without help from Constantinople, towards which he advanced, attacking the strong fortrefs of Tzundadaer, where much treasure was deposited; and 'tis, for ought I have learned, on *this* occasion that we are first introduced to the acquaintance of dæmons and spirits—poetical machinery! which has succeeded in a certain manner to the heathen deities, in modern epick and dramatick tales: and which now with various devices, and under innumerable forms, *dragons* especially, guarded the magick castle against Cabades. That king unable to find out, he said, or Persian soothsayer, or Jewish rabbi, capable of breaking these charms, and binding these aerial combatants; had at length recourse to some Christian bishop, who by prayer put his army into immediate possession of the fort; on which, converted suddenly of course, he turned away his thoughts from hurting the professors of that religion he had now adopted. Thus in these gloomy days did misty superstition magnify each object, and cast a halo round each trifling or common occurrence, till our once pure and simple worship dimmed, though enlarged to eyes of common observers, seemed as if assuming fantastick shapes, which frightened many, and confounded more.

The standard and criterion of our faith, *God's holy word*, was sunk or lost: disregarded quite, and more than half absorbed in dull though wild traditionary tales, while fierce opinions battled in the dark. In vain the virtuous Pope employed his powers, relieved the bishops banished to Sardinia, and set up alms-houses the first upon record. The Emperor himself was a fanatick, and accused *him* of leaning toward the Manichæan heresy. The Manichæans all were driven away, no matter: Anastasius's warm head could not be quiet. He wanted Tribulation, a character in Ben Jonson's comedy, to cry out, I do command thee, spirit of zeal but trouble, to peace within him. Like

Ananias

Ananias in the same play—he would not 'peace. The people looked on images with too much veneration; the Emperor tore them down, but not content, he caused a painter to make representation of monsters, which he exposed for adoration. Will the fools worship *these*? cried he: the people were offended, not unjustly; seditions were excited, which he could with difficulty quell. He had not yet enough. To the sublime Trifagion—Holy! holy! holy Lord God of Sabaoth, the *sanctus Deus! sanctus fortis! sanctus et immortalis miserere nostris*, was added, upon feeling some shocks of an earthquake under the reign of the younger Theodosius, and had been annexed to the litany ever since; but while 'twas singing, Anastasius in his fervour against Arianism exclaimed aloud, *Qui propter nos crucifixus est*—words which drew on him the appellation of patripassian. The uproar was disgraceful, the insurrection dangerous, and seeing the Emperor not long after this struck dead by lightning in a public place, many were confirmed in their ill opinion, although when first invested with the purple, *reign as you have lived* was all the cry. So exemplary had been for years the character of this too busy and restless prince.

But nothing then was cared for scarcely, except what it was strictly impossible for man to comprehend. Homoousians and Semi-Arians, Sabellians and Tritheists filled the mouths of all, though the minds of few if any were capable of splitting such differences, and explaining such unrevealed niceties. Language, when at its best perfection, sinks under the difficulty of discriminating subtleties that escape its greatest vigilance; and language now was superannuated, and unable to follow metaphysical arguments through all their labyrinths of perplexed enquiry; yet nothing else employed men's minds, or was thought worthy of their notice, while

Faith, gospel, all seem'd made to be disputed,
And none were wise enough to be confuted.

'Twas in this reign, I think, we read that St. Matthew's Gospel was found hid in the sepulchre of good St. Barnabus, held in his hand, says
one

one writer ; lying on his bosom, says another. Ill understood devotion went so far, that many people prevailed upon surviving friends to bury in their tombs with them the blessed sacrament—and all that was not war was piety. But while compassion of such error fills a modern reader's breast, disgust rankled in that of Proclus, who saw in living truth the follies we only view in *Retrospection's* glass. Proclus seems to have been an *esprit fort* of the sixth century, who collected the sun's rays into a focus, and appeared, by his promise of securing the Emperor's person from thunderbolts, to have some notion of a conducting rod. His project failed however ; Anastasius, who had always expressed his apprehension that such would be his end, fell down lifeless during a great storm. The populace looked on Proclus with aversion, and he on their credulity with contempt. Meanwhile Severus the Eutychian bishop of Antioch, sending some missionaries to gain over Alamandurus to their newly-broached tenet of a quaternity, he told them there was news which claimed their more immediate attention, for that St. Michael the archangel was dead. Being replied to, that such news was nonsense, because angelic nature cannot die ;—nor can God Almighty, rejoined the ready controvertist ; and if Christ was pure deity, as you say he was, and not made man, he could not have been crucified for us. Severus was condemned to lose his tongue by a grand council held at Illergetum, soon from its first name corrupted to Illerda, and thence to *Lerida*, by which appellation 'tis at this day familiar to us all. Chichester and Abingdon were built about this time by Cissa king of the South Saxons, and Cambridge founded long after, and enlarged by Sigebert ; but Camden *ex Caio* I believe, says it may boast an earlier origin, even from *Cantaber* a Spaniard, born three hundred and seventy-five years before Christ. It is observable *his* name is yet unwittingly transmitted down from generation to generation ; young students of that university are in colloquial chat still called *Cantabs*. Shoreham is scarce less ancient, the work of a British chieftain Khrynnen Shore, perhaps Brennin Shore, meaning King George. I
recollect

recollect George II. prayed for in Welch churches by name of *Brennin Shore* perfectly well, though now they leave it off, the English name being understood in most congregations. But Cherdicke consolidated many counties under his wide domain, Wilts, Hants, Berks, Devonshire, Dorsetshire and Cornwall, beside Somersetshire, all which together formed the kingdom of West Saxons; whilst the half-fabulous records of our half-known history delight in stories of the fair Igrene, and Merlin the magician, who shewed her in a shadow that he raised, the figure of her future husband. This might perhaps give the original rise to the trick of ladies looking in a darkened room to see the destined lover in a glass. I know not whether yet the British or Pictish poem was composed called *Gododen*, which celebrates the day when the merry men, whose drink was mead, hurried to Cattræth. The adventure recorded was at beginning of the sixth century: they had three hundred and sixty-five *horn* cups, one for every day of the year, and every cup had a chain of gold to the cover. "Fetch the drinking horns," they cry, "which are glossy like a wave of the sea: our Llewellyn is like a *dragon* in fight." These *dragons*, Warton thinks, came from Armorica, propagated there by Arabs; he says that *we* had no allusion to dragons till after we were connected with the east. Fairies came in at the same time, but they prospered best in Ireland: there is a tract there called *O'Ferri Land*, or *Fairy Land*, at this day. The Arabians saying how fairies built the city of Esthekar is curious: that the famed Persepolis, burned by Alexander at instigation of Thais, should be rebuilt by fairies, strikes one as singular enough. The Elfin queen Morgain le Fay, who held her chief court at Messina, exhibiting from time to time the favourite vision called after her *Fata Morgana* still, and so sweetly described by Father Angelucci 1643, preserved Prince Arthur too on some occasion. See learned notes on Upton's Fairy Queen. Meantime the death of honest savage Clovis divided once united France again, among four sons and a daughter named Clotilde. She being wife to Amalaricus, leader of

the Visigoths, had the rich province of *Languedoc*, possibly *Langue de Got*, assigned her as her portion; and fixing her residence at famed Thoulouse, proved a suspension of the *loi salique*. But this shews France to have enjoyed even then a form of established government, under their Merovingian race of kings; and 'tis observable the *first* has been the favourite name of Gallic sovereigns through thirteen centuries, Louis being different in nothing but mere pronunciation. Llovis is the word, whether the U or V be upright or not; and the original manner of pronouncing double Ll being difficult to Englishmen, they write *Clovis* as they write *Cluid*: the vale of *Llwyd* is the way we natives spell, and it occurs easily to a Welsh reader that the French monarchy began and ended just as the Roman empire did, with the *same name*. Clovis I. during his extreme long reign, on many occasions interests one's heart: his odd scorn of St. Martin's miracle, who for a sum of money moved the enchanted steed, which he saw plainly was a trick to plunder him, with his docility toward those very priests who were apparently parties in the imposture, suggested by what he deemed indispensable reverence for the religion they professed, engages one's tenderness: and 'tis with grief we read of those excesses permitted and practised during a life of fourscore years and more, which ended at Paris, first by him settled into the metropolitan city of that great empire. His bones remain there still, under the never-finished church dedicated to *la Sainte Genevieve*, and lately profaned by infidels unworthy such a king as Clovis; false reasoners, who in cold blood reject that blest Redeemer, whose bitter agonies endured for us, roused on first hearing of them *his* lion spirit to cry out, "Had I been
 " near Mount Calvary that day, with but five hundred of my trusty
 " Franks, I would have soon revenged such sufferings, and taught those
 " rascals to repent their cruelty." Barbarian virtues are however of small value, like wooden cuts, prized for their rareness and antiquity alone; they fail in all the finer strokes of course, and leave the work imperfect. Tiraboschi observes well, that barbarous eloquence is never clear, plain,

or

or perspicuous; 'tis the most polished nation that excels in pure in-artificial brilliancy of language. The excellency of glass, on this same principle, is to be transparent; those who flourish it, and wrinkle it, and draw roses on it, are doing something very pretty certainly, but they are spoiling the glass. Rude Theodoric knew not how to write, yet was he brave, honest, and provident by nature; honourable too, and magnificent by starts. He supplied Rome with corn, he conveyed water to Ravenna; and when a catholick courtier, in hopes of preferment, suddenly professed himself willing to renounce his belief in Christ's divinity and to turn Arian, because that was the persuasion of the Prince, the generous though brutal Goth spit in his face, saying, that a man who was false to his God would never be true to his king. Yet Clovis we know deluged his land with blood; Theodoric suffered Odoacer to be stabbed treacherously at a banquet; and afterwards took deliberately away that precious life which animated the purest heart, the wisest head, perhaps the completest character that can be found, if we except St. Gregory the Great, between the first Theodosius and Alfred. By death of Boethius was dimmed the bright flame of genuine patriotism, of orthodox belief, of classic elegance, and true philosophy. Learning, her last clear light obscured by interposing clouds of black suspicion, hung round the vaults of Symmachus and his great son-in-law, conglobed and red—a meteor, not a star, lowering and rayless.

But Justin's reign attracts our *Retrospection* to the east, detaining it a moment by his cunning in use of money given him by Amantius for purposes of chusing another person, who, together with his ill-advised friend, were soon secured and silenced, and Justin fixed in the imperial seat. Under this Emperor the General Belisarius began his great career, and manifested his future claim to laurels, which at length by too luxuriant growth shaded his merits from favour of Justinian, nephew and successor to the last-mentioned ignorant though artful creature, best remembered by his falsehood and fondness for the purple, which he grasped closely

even *in articulo mortis*. The Circus to which the new sovereign was carried in triumph at his first accession, proved, though he reigned near forty years, I think, a perpetual plague to him and to his successors, with their blue and green factions supporting one set of chariot-drivers against another set, who quarreled, fought, mutinied even in presence of a despotic king that might, for all that has appeared to us, have crushed them in a moment. These chariot-drivers succeeded to the gladiators, and I believe had somewhat of a deeper meaning than one is now aware of: contention possibly between the land and sea, or perhaps students in alchemy might find out the allusion; common sense can but revolt against their factious folly. But grave Justinian, pious and orthodox (for many years at least), was easily overpowered by pantomime and show: he married a *filie d'opera*, as we should call her now, the fascinating Theodora; raised her to the rank and to more than usual privileges of empress, which she used as many a *bella buffa* would have used them, protecting her own worthless friends from justice, her favourites from detection. Witness her partiality shewn to the unworthy wife of gallant Belisarius, who drove the Syrians before him, brought Persia once more under controul of Constantinople, and performed prodigies of valour with his single arm. The Goths began to fear, the Vandals to *feel* his fury; every battle now produced a victory, and every victory paved the way to useful conquest, and hope of re-establishing a solid lasting empire. While the sovereign, attentive to propriety at home, thought proper to crush what was left of Paganism by abolishing the publick schools for sophists, and what was called heathen philosophy; he punished the voluptuous clergy, whose vile conduct brought a disgrace upon *our own* religion, with unrelentless sternness; converted the publick stews into an hospital for penitents, a Magdalen like ours, and subscribed 180,000*l.* present currency out of his own privy purse for the rebuilding of Antioch, nearly overthrown by an earthquake; besides erecting pious fabricks without end, and with a degree of magnificence surpassing
all

all example. One million sterling was sunk in the vast edifice dedicated to Santa Sophia, the sacred wisdom of God. Nor was commercial interest neglected; Justinian established trade with the east for silk, till then a rarity, even in the seat of universal empire. He did too what is not less worth recording, as it has more reference to present times—he instituted the method of swearing which we now use in England on solemn occasions, by taking the four Gospels, *quæ in manibus teneo*, into both our hands, and making on them a steady asseveration before some lawful magistrate. 'Tis said too, that when this ordonnance was effectuated, the Emperor observed it never would be abolished in the Christian world, for, added he, if this regulation is once broken in upon, confusion will necessarily ensue. As this great legislator was surnamed *Franciscus*, it is particularly to be presumed that he introduced the custom *there* whence we have seen it publicly driven away in the year 1793, and we have seen confusion follow after. Mundus meantime, another successful general in the eventful period we review, conquer'd the coasts of Tunis and Tripoli, left ill defended by those loathsome Vandals, who had ravaged the northern provinces of Africa with harpy-footed fury: and penetrating further into the desolated district, once more subdued it to the gentle dominion of Constantinople, and its sapient sovereign. Dalmatia next flew for protection to the same strong steady hand, who after extirpating the remains of vandalism, triumphed in that country whither Dioclesian had retired two hundred and thirty years before, but which had been long lost to the Roman empire, till this new leader of their active armies (who with the celerity of thought itself traversed the globe) restored it to such peace as poverty can give; and having defeated the Bulgarians in Thrace, and having drawn his troops southward once again, died bravely under the walls of Salona. His death relieved the anxiety of multitudes, who witnessing such new and interesting changes in the torn system of *mundane* affairs, failed not to recollect the Sybil's words, who said, that when Afric should recover Mundus should end; a sentence

tence they explained by supposing that this whole sublunary world, Mundus's—sudden conflagration must necessarily follow the expulsion of such invading powers in Africa, and its recovery from their galling yoke, with a consolatory restoration of those once fruitful territories to *their* dominion, who were considered as rightful possessors and lords of the whole earth—the emperors of Rome. A narrow notion! Could we confide in oracles, 'twere wiser to think the word *recovery* implied a shaking off of that hereditary oppression by which the black inhabitants of one continent have so long been held as slaves to their lighter-coloured brethren in the three other quarters of our earth. In that sense Africa may be recovering whilst I write, and Mundus daily does give signs of his approaching dissolution to all such as have not their perceptions swallowed up in appropriate distress, or general astonishment. But the grammarians Festus and Priscian, claim a *retrospective* glance; Cappadox too, with his infidel associate Trebonianus, who assisted in forming the celebrated code of Justinian, suffice to prove that learning, as she set westward behind the mountains, dropt not down all at once, below our sad horizon, but left a twilight mild at its commencement, useful certainly, when Dionysius made this reign remarkable for wise dismissal of all former chronology, and for the fixing a true Christian æra, dating in future all events from his appearance in the flesh, by whom, according to divine appointment *all things were made*. Is it in this place worth our while to observe, that the word *Dionysius* means, Dios, God—*Nusos*, Restorer of Mankind in Noah. The man who persuaded Justinian to adopt a new mode of counting time, was known by name of *Dionysius* the Less; he was a Roman *abate*. One might indeed wonder why Pagans called any man Dionysius, but we see Christians daily calling men Emanuel and Salvador; though one means *God with us*, and the other *Saviour*; and perhaps it may be more to our purpose to observe that this æra, now kept sacred for 1260 years, a period marked by Pagans and by Christians, was only broken in upon by modern arrogance in 1794. Theodoric, a far more tender-hearted barbarian than Robespierre, received it willingly; and
less

less attached than formerly to Arianism, felt such compunction for the death of Symmachus, by him unjustly doomed to suffer torture, only for having bewailed the ill fate of his accomplished son-in-law Boethius, that his strong northern nerves never recovered their due tone again ; but strange thick-coming fancies robbed him of food and rest. After some weeks of dreadful perturbation, the Gothick sovereign starting suddenly from table, protested that he saw and recognized, in a large fish served up at supper-time, the features of unhappy Symmachus ; whose innocent, and even praise-worthy conduct, seemed in the pale bones of that dead animal to stare on him with looks of sadness and reproach for the unfeeling haste he was condemned with. From that hour remorseful Theodoric eat no more ; his death, preceded by imaginative terrors, grew even to himself desirable, and Amalesontha swayed the sceptre during the childhood of her son ; for whom she, as sole parent, sought a literary education, providing tutors and instructors from all nations, language masters in particular, adding her own example, which she enforced by a style of command that she expected not to see or hear disputed. Gifted with a variety of endowments, this lady's awful carriage claimed respect from her young pupil, as possessing in her own person those talents she wished his heart to sigh for ; and sister to Theodoric, her Scythian blood bestowed on her but little flexibility of mind, or disposition to procure by influence, what her station gave her right to enforce by authority. Pulling her knot too tight however, the cord broke ; for Athalaricus at eleven years old stepped forward, and complained to his Gothick nobles at a feast, that his mother had that day dishonoured him, their lawful sovereign, by a blow : a blow to *me* ! exclaimed the sturdy prince, and from the hand of a woman ! His chieftains praised the premature boldness, and the boy obtained instant emancipation. Tutors meantime fetched in from softer climates and of more supple tempers than the regent, soon saw the way to hinder *their* dismissal. They then began to teach their royal pupil lessons less difficult, and more attractive ;

exciting

exciting and supplying his precocity with pleasures fatal to virtue, and ruinous to health.

Amalefontha first indignantly withdrew, and wedding her first cousin Theodatus, was with him crowned queen to the king of Italy. In two years she returned, and being once arrived at Ravenna, put her son's vile preceptors all to death: revenge was gratified, but nothing more; young Athalaricus, debilitated by early debauchery, knew little of what was going forward; his powers of mind and body all were weakened, and a consumption, 'spite of his mother's care, destroyed him in six months after she came back. The lady tore her hair with grief and rage, but Theodatus liking not an associate of such spirit, tricked her into an island of the Lago Bolsena, strangled her there with his own hands, and threw her into the water; not without difficulty, and ill-applied violence; so rough and vigorous was her resistance. Justinian took his time; invincible Belisarius, after conquering in every other corner of the world by his own valour, was made master of Ravenna by the Gothick dissensions. Spain, Sicily, and Sardinia owned his power; and Gilimer, the Vandal, who had deluged whole provinces with blood, being dragged in chains to Constantinople, declared before the throne there, *that all was vanity*.* The victorious warrior next attacked Theodatus, whose feeble and ill-managed opposition hastened his own end: he fell at last in flight, not battle, and his unmanly cries rendered his death despicable, whose life had been mean and treacherous: but Vitiges, who forcibly married Amalefontha's daughter, kept up in her right for some years longer the show of Gothick kings in Italy. This year, or about that time, was Paulinus consul at Rome, and he was the last. The eastern empire chose consuls for ten or fifteen years afterwards, and then that dignity and the name of it, *burned quite out*. Vandalism, completely driven from Numidia, where they had forced the people even to eat each other, and where

* *Vanitas vanitatum!* exclaimed the captive—*et omnia vanitas*.

the conquest of Belisarius over that swarm of locusts left only a sort of desolate tranquillity, removed back to Europe, where they cast lots for districts not only in Spain, as Idatius tells, who was eye-witness of their cruelties in that country, but in the north too. They clustered in large bodies along the banks of the *White River*, *Albis*, the *Elbe*, and beyond there among the Pruzzi or Borruffi : there is a province called Vandal Prussia yet ; while many Lombards fixed at Mecklenburgh, and many were spread over the Venetian terra firma. The last irruption of a new shoal was under Totila, and Mr. Gibbon does not wait for his arrival and failure, to pronounce Rome freed from her runick tyrants, and reposing all confidence in the popes alone. This, now more than ever, interesting epocha, he calculates to have happened upon the 10th day of December, 536, when a strange mixture of Christian and Pagan rejoicings seem to have taken place, if we believe that the old lupercal was not even then abolished, and that the savage gaieties of such a festival were going forwards even upon Christmas day itself ; all this under the reign of a most pious emperor, and under the auspices of a general famous for scrupulous orthodoxy. That it was really in the year 536 the change was made, appears, says our historian, not only from Procopius, whose authority, the text having been corrupted, is of small value ; but from the series of events. The month December is ascertained, it seems by Evagrius ; and that Belisarius entered the town upon the *shortest* day is admitted upon the evidence of Nicephorus Calixtus, I believe, a Greek historian of the fourteenth century. I have myself seen a remark somewhere how *St. Peter's* dominion began when the sun was in the sign *pisces*, alluding to his employment as a *fisherman* ; but that sets it very little later. Jesus is represented with a *fish* in the cathedral church of Ravenna ; with an *anchor* on some gems at Capodi Monte ; and the madonna del *pesce* is a favourite picture of Raphael. A subterranean temple discovered lately in England led people to recollect these occurrences ; all its ornaments are *fish*, but the Christian monogram proves it to have been no Pagan

place of worship. They never admitted our insignia into their temples, but the Basilides held that it was not evil to suffer heathen symbols in a Christian church. We are of their minds still as it appears, or sculptors would not be encouraged to set up Hercules and Minerva in Westminster Abbey. Meanwhile St. Peter's profession as a *fisher*, and his command from our Saviour to *fish* for men, naturally struck his attentive followers; and that the last words of the seventeenth chapter in the Greek Testament should be analogous both to the Apostle's employment, and to his Master's name, produced this pretty epigram printed in Walton's Angler.

Unicus est medicus reliquorum Piscis et istis
Fas quibus est medicum tangere certa salus.
Hic typus est Salvatoris mirandus Jesu
Litera mysterium quælibet hujus habet,

Hunc cupio, hunc capias bon frater arundinis ἰχθυῶν
Solveret hic pro me debita teque Deo.
Piscis is est, et piscator mihi credite qualem
Vel piscatorem piscis amare velit.

ΙΧΘΥΣ,

Piscis.

I. Ἰησοῦς		Jesus
X. Χριστός		Christus
Θ. Θεός		Dei
Υ. Υἱός		Filius
Σ. Σωτήρ		Salvator.

But we are engaged in a reviewal of the sixth century; and if the papal power really did commence when Echard and when Gibbon say it did, small calculation will suffice to shew when it must end. 1260 years specified by the prophet Daniel, and appropriated again by St. John, may be easily added to 536

1260 they will make up the year

in which I am endeavouring, 1796, to form a summary of events for purpose of *Retrospection*.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

FROM THE EXPULSION OF THE GOTHICK KINGS BY
BELISARUS TO A. D. 600.

WE must now, fixing our glass on the old metropolis, observe rough Boniface, a Roman pope, struggling, in spite of new regulations, to appoint as his successor in the chair Vigilius, who was however obliged to wait the death of three predecessors; the last of whom, Silverius, was banished and even starved to death, in consequence of having disobliged Theodora, by refusing to revoke the sentence of heresy pronounced against Anthimus her favourite bishop. When he, Silverius, was thus disposed of, Vigilius bought the see, paying for it two hundred pounds weight of gold to the fair Empress, whose parasites and pandars spent it among them, while the new Primate used his ill-gotten power with zeal and diligence, denying however to restore Anthimus, though he had bought the see on that condition. He was the first pope who commanded prayer to be made, and altars erected towards the east; but morals were run down so very low, that it was necessary for a council, held at Maçon in those days, to decree that bishops should not keep great dogs to worry beggars, nor see their servants kick the poor about for Christmas sports and gambols. Yet such at the same time was the spirit of pious enthusiasm, that many bishops held a consultation, whether they might or might not, without offence to God and society, pull a madman forcibly down, who would stand upon a pillar night and day, near Treves in Germany, to imitate Simeon Stylites; although such was the severity of that winter, that such a resolution must soon end in death. They got him away how-

ever, and put him in a monastery, much to his own disquiet and that of the people who delighted in such exhibitions of sanctity, and ceased not to lament our inclement seasons, which hindered people from performing penances such as oriental zeal inflicted on its votaries, and eastern climes more easily permitted. Fakirs and Bonzees are at this day trying to obtain future happiness by voluntary and self-imposed wretchedness in India; and I think 'tis Anson's Voyages which tell us how pious women at Peru, in his day, dragged heavy crosses up and down the street, and wore a waistcoat quilted with thorns within, to keep their anguish always alive; so favourable are hot climates to a spirit of deviation concerning sensual pleasures and sensual punishments. The women, in order to mortify themselves, sought for deformities which heaven had denied them, and to become loathsome, by never having washed or combed, was considered as a claim on Paradise. See the story of St. Mary the Egyptian, and many more. Such things are now *nearly* gone out of Europe, although I have myself seen ladies perform odd penances enough at Naples and at Mantua; and Jane Rogers, of Cumberland, was well known in the eighteenth century, for wandering about the north, in consequence of a religious vow; she knitted every part of her own strange clothing upon two wooden pins: the wool she gathered, carded herself, and spun. She accepted no alms except of food and tobacco, never touched money for fourteen years, nor ever slept in a place she paid for; but carried her whole possessions at her back, in a large bag, which was so necessary to her existence, and to her comfort as it should seem, that when she had nothing else to carry, she filled the bag with sand. But private memoirs are valuable, chiefly as they evince the state of publick manners; and what has been mentioned of the popes in this chapter, militates against the notion which closed our last; because we find that although Rome, now no longer the metropolis of a vast empire, was dwindled down into a mere bishop's see, Justinian's supremacy was no less acknowledged; on the contrary, it was submitted to with blind acquiescence,

both

both by the pontiff who protected Rome, and by the patriarch who had the care of ecclesiastical matters at Constantinople, and who, by the Emperor's command, accepted the second place after St. Peter's successor. The sovereign however growing old, and his head weakened by perpetual pondering upon incomprehensible speculations, began to think Christ's human nature a mere phantom, and that he never had eat and drank in reality. This heresy was called that of the Docetes, to which were likewise joined the Monothelites, who said that Jesus had but one will as God, and no ideas as man. To these fancies the Metropolitan refusing his assent, Justinian deposed and banished him without consulting pope or patriarch, and worse than all, growing jealous of those acclamations that resounded wherever Belisarius turned his steps, and wholly governed by Theodora, who loved the general's *wife*, not *him*; he, after all his services, exiled that loyal unresisting chief, content to end his days in such obscurity, that numberless fables were fabricated concerning the manner in which he spent his time. The strange notion however of his begging at the gates of Rome, is now considered by scholars as a mere fiction, ennobled by the rough sublimity of Salvator Rosa's pencil; enriched by the glowing colours of Vandyke; and rendered with an exactness worthy truth alone, by the minute nicety of Vanderwerff. But Clothaire, in these days sole king of France, after subduing Cranmuse, his haughty rival, burned him to death in the poor peasant's house, whither he run for refuge, with his protecting friends; and having committed many other excesses, particularly the forcible seizure of a beautiful lady, wife to Gaudier des Iveteaux, was suddenly struck with remorse, and of his own accord, made the lands of that nobleman, who died of grief, an independent state bestowed upon his son, whose family have enjoyed it ever since. There were princes de *Bellay*, the name of that territory in the seventeenth century; and a Monsieur des Yveteaux flourished as a French wit in time of Louis XIV. A general famine that affrighted all our continent however, lays closer claim upon our *retrospective*

*spectiv*e eye : it was soon followed by a universal plague, a new volcano opened near the Rhone, and terrified the conscience of Clothaire, while Totilas the Ostrogoth, fought to subdue Rome by dint of starving out the few inhabitants, and would have succeeded, had not her active bishop Vigilius, gone himself to seek for corn to Constantinople. He died on his way home, if I remember, not without strong suspicions of being poisoned. A comet too marked these tremendous times, and *that* was followed by an unusual paleness of the sun. But a still stranger meteor than the comet, calls for our admiration. Not the wild northern conqueror, who seemed an *ignis-fatuus* alone, compared to his great predecessor Attila, whom he professed to make the model of his conduct, in attacking that venerable city, which now nearly deserted, was like to fall an easy prey to every furious foe ; but a new character in life and history. Narses, the far-famed eunuch of the east, by birth a Persian, by profession a courtier, bred literally to the loom and distaff, when in the female apartments of the palace, he had during his early youth held such of the servile and subaltern offices, as had been appointed him by bed-chamber women and pages, little cognizant of the latent warrior they were commanding. He meantime, at leisure moments from his work, studied the art of war with such success, that he at length obtained, from influence of ladies in the train of Theodora, permission to attend in the new regiments levied for purpose of driving the Ostrogoths from Italy. Once settled in the army, Belisarius, who saw and owned his merit, gave him command and power : which possessed, Totilas, and Teias who succeeded *him* when killed, soon sunk before the resistless courage of Narses, whose high prowess and victorious deeds amazed mankind ; and tried at least to teach them, that soul, not body, constitutes the hero. Some Franks opposed, pretending to despise him ; but all opposition to such gallantry was vain, and all contempt ill-founded. About that time or sooner 'twas, that an internal cancer consequent on her ill life, consumed the vitals of once beautiful and lively Theodora ; who mingled virtue with her shameless

less vices, had shown fortitude on some occasions, fidelity on others, while grave Justinian, having outlived friends and enemies, and empress, expired with no disturbances at all, except those which the unfathomable and fruitless researches of the times afforded, and which these lines of Cowley seem made on purpose to controul, when he says—

In this wild maze let vain endeavours end,
How can the less the greater comprehend?
Or finite reason reach infinity?
Since who could fathom God were more than He.

Narſes meantime made proud Pelagius pope, who was ſuppoſed to have given poiſon to his predeceſſor; while Britain cultivated commerce under Ida and Ælla, and Guthrie thinks London was even then a place of much note for its riches. Carlisle's gaieties, led by Queen Guinever, were, as we know, the theme of future ſong. That literature ran low among us* may be proved by the laſt-mentioned author's ending his liſt of claſſicks with Procopius, and leaving a juſt blank to venerable Bede. The monastery and biſhoprick of St. Aſaph in Flintſhire, were however founded by Kentigern biſhop of Glaſgow, who having placed it on the river *Elwy* was called *Episcopas Elwenſis* for a time; but being recalled to Scotland whence he came, reſigned the ſee to his diſciple *Aſaph*, from whom it took its name. The tiny ſpot called Icombkill this while, diſpenſed from midſt our ſtormy Hebrides the *northern lights* of truth; irradiating Scots, Picts, and dwellers in thoſe diſtant regions, with coruſcations emanating from true religion, and conſecrating the ſeat of ſcience; where, in her hairy gown and moſſy cell, ſhe taught

* It ſhould perhaps be mentioned here, that the great emperor Juſtinian himſelf never learned to write. His ſecretary cut the letters for him to ſign, in ſoft wood; then holding his maſter's hand, drew the inſtrument where the place was cut, thus A V. Theſe, Jacques Auguſte de Chevanes thinks, were the *tonſæ et raſæ literæ*. He takes all this from Procopius.

and practised virtue—late rewarded by the pathetick praise of Samuel Johnson, when in the year 1772 he visited those remote islands, and gave the best account of them now extant. *St. Columb* was perhaps so called from his devotion to the *holy dove*, perhaps from his spirit of *exploration*: *Columbkill* was *Columb's cill*, or *cell* very possibly, and something tells me I have heard as much. But Dr. Wallace, probably from Hector Boethius, has informed us, that the Orkney and Shetland islands were then occupied by two old nations, *Papi* and *Peti*. The first of these possessed the more northern islands, in the appellations of which the names are yet preserved: the last inhabited the southern cluster, thence called *Terra Petorum*; and the narrow sea dividing them from Scotland *Fretum Petlandicum*, the *Pict* Land, or rather Petland Frith. Hence we believe that the young prince whom St. Columb converted, when he met him at the wild court of King Budæus, was chief of these *Peti*; and there are those who think (See Sibbald's Introduction to the History of ancient Scotland) that these are the same *Peti* named by Herodotus, when he enumerates the Thracian tribes that went with Xerxes into Greece. *Bistones* and *Satræ* are certainly mentioned by him. The Bistons and Saters are among the oldest families in Shetland *now*, says Campbell in his Survey, written about the year 1760, as I remember. But if few learned men graced these dark days, Cedrenus contrives to amuse himself and his readers with stories of a learned dog, observable chiefly for this, that he played over in the sixth century the same identical tricks that we ourselves have seen performed some forty years ago by the *chien sçavant*, and some time after by an English spaniel. This is odder than the continued existence of the *Bistons* and *Saters*: but perhaps a dog can be taught only such tricks, or perhaps the same ideas occur to the preceptors of dogs in every age; some narrowness it certainly does prove, either in pupil or tutor. Gildas, surnamed the Wise, however, should not be forgotten; nor should it pass unnoticed, that about that time the fledged Polack, as our Shakespeare calls him, began to feel the animating

mating principle; and whilst one half of the city Pompeiopolis in Myfia was swallowed up by earthquakes, Gnesna in Polonia started up dating its first foundation from a nest of eagles found there as he was hunting, by Lechus the legislator of the north: who took that bird for his imprese in future, and Poniatowsky painted it upon his coach so late as the year 1761. The town destroyed had formerly been dedicated to the sun, and was called *Soli*, till Pompey changed its name. 'Twas from an old inscription upon the cenotaph of Sardanapalus found there, that his name has been consigned to infamy ever since. But Justin II. claims a momentary attention, as both the blue and green factions united in their preference of him, the most deserving nephew of Justinian: and in the days we tell of, it was chiefly the riotous partizans of different chariot-drivers in the arena, that disposed of empires and dismembered states. Rome seemed herself annihilated, but as the Pope Pelagius supported in some measure his sacerdotal dignity, he was the first bishop elevated to the papal chair since great St. Leo, without requiring the Emperor's consent; and the neglect was now more accidental than designed, for the church had not yet as formally shaken off the state's supremacy. Pelagius owed his seat and dignity to Narfes, and was the first Pope, as Gibbon tells, who required celibacy of his clergy: he bid the deacons and sub-deacons leave either their wives or their offices, and what deacon or sub-deacon was likely to hesitate in the choice? His patron abhorred a married priest, he said, and those who were abhorred by Narfes lived not long. The new Emperor however, wholly swayed by his young consort Sophia the Proud, had the imprudence, at her suggestions, to send the gallant leader an insulting letter; which the ill-advised lady wrote herself, thinking it a high strain of loftiness perhaps to bid him return and spin with her maids in the palace, and not think of setting himself up to rule the west. In effect he was immediately superseded, and his place filled up by a vicegerent, with the style and title of *Exarch*, the *seventh* form of government in Rome. This officer held his court at Ravenna, and

ruled the state after a new mode, which lasted on (*nominally* at least) till time of Charlemagne. But we must follow the fortune of old Narfes, who sent his thoughtless correspondent word, that he would spin her such a thread anon as she and all her maids never should untwist. To keep his word, he made immediate application to Alboin, a semi-barbarous prince, residing in Hungary, where the rough natives had with horror viewed him to their polluted altar drag by force his promised bride, the beautiful Rosmunda, whose father Conimundus having denied her to his arms after betrothment, he murdered even before the shrieking daughter's eyes; and forming his scalped cranium into a cup, obliged the wretched Princess to drink out of her parent's skull the festive, but to him, in future, the fatal marriage draught. Encouraged by revolting Narfes, this pitiless leader of Pannonian multitudes pressed forward into Italy; but the offended lady who followed in his train, and loved his chamberlain Count Helmichis, watched an unguarded hour, and betrayed her too-confiding spouse into the hands of that lord and another, Peridæus, who stabbed their master Alboin when asleep. The assassins were obliged to run however; and taking shelter at Ravenna, a town inimical to Narfes, were received, and Peridæus proposed the celebration of his nuptials with the widow, who had promised him *her* hand in order to obtain the benefit of his. Rosmunda was no rigid observer of her promises; the Exarch, to whom she applied for release of them, was himself sensible to her charms, Longinus, and sent his rival chained to Constantinople, where Justin and Sophia causing him to be thrown to a lion, the brave Croatian killed the savage beast, threatened the men who turned it out upon him, and having stabbed two noblemen at a time, using both hands at once, the Emperor commanded his eyes to be put out, and caged him for the remainder of his life. Count Helmichis meantime, her real favourite, being too much in love to act with prudence, saw the officious manners of the Exarch, and viewed them with a jealous eye: but teasing the lady too much with his suspicions concerning Longinus's zeal in
her

her service, made himself inconvenient to Rosmunda's schemes, and she resolved upon his death immediately. Adding deceit to cruelty, she herself prepared the poison, and with an air of gaiety administered it to him in sherbet. The sturdy officer however, familiar with assassination, on the first taste doubted not the intent; and seizing his perfidious princess with a firm grasp, forced her to divide the fatal potion with him, and then expired in her lifeless arms. Etmuller says that soldiers have an idea whoever drinks out of a human skull shall thereby grow invulnerable. They must have been true descendants of the old Scandinavian deities who thought so: but Etmuller* died only in 1732. Perhaps at Leipzick, his native place, they think so *still*. There are there, I believe, strong remains of runic and celtic ideas. The sublime ode composed by King Regner Lodbrog in the ninth century, has a stanza saying, "We fought with swords; I am still full of joy
 " when I think what a banquet is preparing for me in the palace of
 " the gods. Soon, soon in the splendid abode of Odin shall we drink
 " beer out of the skulls of our enemies; this will secure us immortality.
 " A brave man shrinks not from death, no coward enters the hall of
 " Odin. Let no man utter expressions of fear; he shall perish by the
 " bites of serpents; his abode shall be in Nastrande, where drops of
 " venom distill through the lattices, &c. &c." But *Retrospection* calls us off to Justin, who now first persuaded he had done a folly, began to fear the consequences of his wife's imprudence, when *thirty* tyrants of the Lombard race divided Italy among them, leaving his Exarch far less power than pomp, and only that midland territory in obedience, which has been since known by name of the Romagna. Old Narfes too, returning next from Naples, which he had stirred up to rebellion, helped to perplex the Emperor, too slow to take alarm: but age at

* Etmuller was no infidel physician: he thinks with all his heart, that if you gather a root of cyanus upon *Corpus Christi* day, you may, by holding it tight in your hand, stop a hæmorrhage of the nose.

length checked, and death frustrated the projects of this indignant and revengeful eunuch. Avarice is the sole passion which *can* keep its ground at ninety. Stimulated by that, he stained his warrior sword; and having accumulated immense treasures, from plunder of the Italian states, he threw them altogether into a well, murdering the wretched men who brought it thither, that they might tell no tales. While Justinopolis, now *Capo d'Istria*, was built by the Emperor as a fortress against these barbarians, who under Clepho, son to Alboin, but not by fair Rosmunda, besieged Rome once again; but the imperial troops soon routed them, and killed the chief of that invading army. The thirty dukes now felt so forcibly the effects consequent upon divided power, they soon took up a new and strange resolve, making subscription for a king to whom they all should pay a voluntary homage. To this high station *Antharis*, a Lombard of venerable extraction, was elected, nor gave cause of repentance or even regret to his subscribers; while Chilperic and Sigebert, Fredegund and Brunehault, made France re-echo with wild tales of wickedness, and vice yet unexampled. A dreadful shock of earthquake in the east, announced the birth of Mahomet the impostor; and Justin somewhere about this period, I believe, fell into a state of mental incapacity. He had no son: his daughter named Arabia married a doge of Venice; *her* descendants inhabited that gay town as late as 1785. Another daughter married to Genoa: the house *she* fixed in, not being as noble or illustrious as the Venetian, sunk willingly its own original designation in that of *Justiniani*. I saw a lady of that family myself, and fancied she derived from Justinian I. till I was told what I ought to have known before, that he had no child at all by Theodora. *Casa Badoera* is the name of Arabia's descendants. Gibbon says *that* is the greatest private family in Europe; but it is very difficult to be accurate in such assertions, which Memmo, drawing his pedigree from the Roman consul Memmius, disavowed in my hearing. Upon a pestilence happening at Genoa long after this, the only surviving Justiniani was a priest; and

and was, in consideration of his noble blood, permitted to marry and continue the Emperor's race. He begged a female from Casa Badoera as alone worthy his addresses: they wedded, after five centuries had separated their consanguinity; and the old lady I saw at Genoa (See Piozzi's Observations and Reflections) was lineally descended from that pair, connected A. D. 1174.

Tiberius was now created Cæsar Augustus, second of the name for near six hundred years. He was a Thracian, as I think, by birth. His firm behaviour, and above all his zeal for abstruse speculations, the virtue of those times, dazzling the mole-eyed historians, they tell nothing of him but what is good, and dwell with pleasure on his submission to the priesthood—then for the most part deeply engaged in keen disputes, and ever earnest in their endeavours to ascertain the precise moment when Messiah was *in heaven first called so*; forgetful of his precepts here on earth, while Christian love and charity were lost in railing accusations of heresy, with which each combatant was hasty to brand his warm competitor. It were however good to recollect, that although council after council were summoned to decide in what manner Jesus was Christ, i. e. both God and man; and to make clear the hidden mystery of hypostatic union, by which a trinity of persons comprehends itself in unity of godhead; the good bishops who diligently assisted at and composed these councils, could not write, *not even their names*; as Clarkson, Warton, Jortin, hundreds more inform us: they very gravely set their mark to their opinions; while some attendant clerk, paid for the purpose, signed and subscribed *their* answers to enquiries which Newton and which Paschal chose to leave undiscussed. So much more bold is ignorance than science. It likewise is observable enough, that as these bishops * mostly made a *cross* serve

* Unlike to these our *Hafaph* Venedota, grandson, as Mr. Pennant says, to *Pabo* *pou Prydain* or *Prytan*, Britain, a cultivated character, wrote and studied; and left not only his name to our Flintshire bishoprick St. Asaph, but has been celebrated by Vossius among the *Scriptores Britannicæ*.

for the signature on such occasions, poor folks who cannot write *make a cross still*.

The proper time for keeping Easter served as a new subject of offence, concerning which the French and Spaniards made a dreadful contest worthy a barbarous age. Battles between Abares and Bulgares, ferocious tribes! remind one of Voltaire's *Candide*, and *Retrospection* in the ogres and ogresses, recognizes the entertaining fables, called *Contes de ma Mere l'Oye*,* which frightened and delighted our babyhood. The Chagan too, no less detestable, who entering on the Venetian territories with a troop of Huns, besieged the beautiful Tomilda in Friuli; and promising her marriage, prevailed with her by messages, expressive of tenderest affection, to betray the town into his hands. Then seizing on the citadel, performed the ceremony, and thrust the weak deluded lady out to perish *literally* in the half-forsaken streets, of insults committed by licentious soldiers on her person. Lest we should be led however to suppose, that the eastern empire was in a state of higher civilization than the west, it will be necessary to relate how ill-advised Hormisdas, monarch and tyrant of Persia, enraged about the loss of a battle against Germany, sent a woman's dress, cap and gown, to his general, Baza, by way of reproach for his having shewn so little courage in the engagement. Baza rebelled in consequence of this affront; and assisted by Cosroe, the hereditary prince, to whom this officer was a *bosom* friend; they soon arrived at home, invested the palace with their soldiers, and suddenly deposed the father and the king. Making a show of equity however, a council was called together in the great square, and a proposal made there aloud by Baza, to elect one of their master's sons. "*Any of them but Cosroe!*" exclaimed the captive sovereign from his balcony; whence, though in irons, he had the strange fearlessness to recommend his own particular favourite, a youth, son to his best loved female. No more was necessary, Cosroe and Baza forced out the unfortunate sultana and her boy, who little
conscious

* Mother Goose's Tales.

conscious of the given offence, were *sawed asunder* in each other's presence; and all before the face of agonized Hormisdas, who chained to his sad station at the rails of his own balcony, cursed and reviled their horrid practices, with rage equally impossible to curb, to express, or to endure. His passion suffocating him at length, the rebel's club dashed at his swelling head, was by Cosroe considered as a *coup de grace*.

Et la courroux du ciel pour en venger la terre
Nous donne un parricide en défaut du tonnerre.

Thunder no more affrights the guilty lands,
Giv'n by avenging heav'n to parricidal hands.

A story of a gentler nature here makes a pleasing break, or change at least, amidst the annals of Gothick barbarity. Fair Theudelinda was the only child of Garibaldi, Duke and Prince of Bavaria, and the subscription monarch we have read of, meant to make her queen of Italy. He sent an embassy therefore to demand his bride, declaring his purpose to live the while himself in some devout retirement. Bent upon other thoughts however, he followed, closely disguised, the train of his own envoy, acting the part of subaltern to him who had commission to see, and to report the lady's charms. But when Theudelinda came down to supper with the nobles, and at her father's command, submitted those charms to view; Antharis scarce able to controul his rapture, presented the cup to his pretended lord, and when his mistress pledged it, took it from her: silently at the same moment, but passionately pressing her hand: and drawing the happy finger across his lips, shewed evident signs of passion yet unobserved by all except the Princess, who when retired, told to her nurse the dangerous adventure; lamenting in pathetic terms the officer's audacity, and her own beauties, which had inspired so inadmissible, though not to her an undelightful flame. The nurse however, better skilled in heroick amours, consoled her patroness with a conjecture, that it might be the King of Italy himself. His port and personal accomplishments made

made this conjecture probable—the event next day proved her experience in affairs of gallantry, whilst the loves of Antharis and Theudelinda were celebrated by the bards, and sanctified at the altar.

About this period 'twas that Livigild, a leader of great note in Celtiberia, no longer to be called so soon, but Spain; seized with religious phrenzy, put his own son to death for being an Athanasian, not an Arian; to which opinion he was strongly biased, as having been newly converted to our faith from paganism, he had received it in *that* mode, examining no other; but hating, as he said, a *consubstantialist*.

Suffering himself afterwards however, to be instructed in those tenets, for which his matchless son had suffered martyrdom, repentance soon returned in tides of pious grief; and Livigild, made *king* and *proselyte*, embraced our purer principles with warmth, and for the zeal he showed in propagating them, obtained the title of *Catholicus*—style of the Spanish monarchs to this day, in honour of a man who forgave many taxes to the state, reduced his civil list to bare simplicity, and by immense donations to the church, joined with an unremitting care towards the poor, endeavoured through a long life of severe penitence, to perform that difficult task of quieting his conscience for the mad murder of an innocent, and praise-worthy child.

There are who say, that having killed Hermenichis, the father abdicated his command immediately, and Reccaredus, brother to the martyred prince, performed these meritorious actions, and was the first catholic King of Spain, while Livigild buried his affliction in a monastery; but these were days of darkness, and *Retrospection* must forgive the gloom.

Latin ceased almost to be understood at Rome, once seat and even throne of classic elegance; but quick returning to its former character of an asylum rather than metropolis, all who were persecuted in other realms for their adherence to the true faith, according to the orthodox opinions concerning the controverted mysteries of trinity and incarnation,

nation, resorted thither; and from the Prince's neglect of this once sovereign city, joined with its nearness to the Exarch's court, and immense distance from imperial presence, all care on't dropt insensibly upon the popes, who must at length be cleared from any appearance of settled or original intention, to seize on or exert their temporal power for any other purpose than that truly blameless and pious one, of comforting so sad a residence of wretchedness, and in some measure of maintaining a necessary police for the security of its few inhabitants. John of Castile, who finished two half-built churches begun by his predecessor, reigned thirteen years, I think, if reign it may be called; and Benedict, contemporary to the thirty Dukes, who subscribed to finish their own tyranny, died of a broken heart from seeing the miseries of his native land—

Qui miseranda videt veteris vestigia Roma,
Illa potest merito dicere—Roma fuit.

Among the various heresies infesting the five or six first ages of our church, one sect I think retained the doctrine of Pythagoras, and fancied they believed in a metempsychosis: such surely must have thought the soul of the first Antonine transmigrated into the sacred person of Gregory the Great, for consolation of the Christian world, and for the honour too of human nature. His unaffected refusal of earthly honours, his serious resistance against sitting in the papal chair, manifested a pure and humble heart; his homilies, his sermons of moral and religious instruction, to a besotted people; the sweet familiar letters that are still extant, betray his inward feelings, and evince a sincerity of unfeigned virtue, almost without an equal. While his extensive liberality and redemption of captives, continually made by the Lombard princes, particularly Agilulphus, merit the acknowledgment of all mankind.

His kind remembrance too of *our* poor island, remote in every sense from happiness in this world; and filled by pagan follies, barbarous

practices that obstructed the foundation of true faith, and persecuted its professors who vainly promised us felicity to come; ought surely to engage all *Englishmen* to look on *his* life with peculiar pleasure: nor did he limit his cares to the procuring necessary comforts for a suffering world. He watched over the fine arts, paid money he could ill spare for drawings, to keep that sickening science from complete extinction; and previously composing airs well suited to devotion, is said to have pricked down with his own hand the *antiphonarium centonem*, by which the singing in the Roman church is, I believe, regulated to this very hour. Whether he *invented* the lengthened *notation* or not may be disputed; his uncommon talents, and versatility of genius have been proved. When he had once fixed in his mind that titles heaped on popes were *antichristian*, we wonder not that 'twas by his command that he was called *Servus Servorum Dei*—*such he was*, without hyperbole or exaggeration. His temperate life, marked by the love of God, and love of man, was spent in service of all Christian creatures. Yet did he take and transmit to his successors the triple crown as bishop of Rome, primate of Italy, and apostle of the West, called from that day the *three legations*, and unabolished till A. D. 1800, and haughtily condemned the patriarch of Constantinople for reviving the dispute about precedence, and for calling himself (impertinently enough we own) the universal bishop: so like Saint Peter in whose chair he sat.

He rather than not go before
Would forfeit heaven at the door.

We must however recollect, that his opponent who occupied the residentiary and oriental see, disputed for the *post* (as did Saint Gregory), not for the *individual*. He was a mortified and almost an emaciated skeleton, called Jean le Jeuneur *par eminence*, having never touched meat or wine since his ordination; scarce ever milk and eggs: so virtuous and sincere were these good pontiffs. That in their day prayers for the dead should be first introduced is strange, and contradictory; because

because at the same time other *dead* were now implored to bestow their prayers upon the living, who little reflected that “it had cost more to redeem their souls, so that they must let that alone for ever.” These institutions afterwards degenerated into a commerce gainful to the church, although avarice tainted not the mind of this great Pope, who honest in his solicitude for departed excellence, was praying for the future happiness of Trajan, at an altar shewn to this day at Rome, whence people tell how a strange voice proceeded, and in a præternatural tone warned him to cease his unavailing suit, assuring him the object of his care was safe, and in the hands of his Creator. What he decreed, that images should neither be torn down, nor worshipped, but held in decent veneration, should have been written down in letters of gold: our commentators say *that* was a command which could not have been obeyed; for set up images once in your churches, they *will* be worshipped whether popes and councils will or not. In remote times perhaps it might be so; but I saw Nôtre Dame, at Dresden, loaded with devotional figures, paintings, and other ornaments, and no one dreamed of paying them adoration. The Lutherans know better; had Gregory’s successors however, resembled *him*, Luther’s reformation would have been superfluous, and Calvin never would have been heard of. With his pontificate we close this chapter, which has brought out to *Retrospection’s* eye the first 600 years after our Lord’s ascension; and shown how those wild rushing inundations from the north, ran as they subsided into a vast variety of fissures great and small; formed by the fury of their first onset, and broke the uniformity of *civil* life, as did the deluge 2500 years before, crack the smooth surface of our natural world, and loosen the separating parts from each other. Manners followed the general alteration, and states grew independent of their common lord.

C H A P. II.

FROM GOOD ST. GREGORY TO THE BIRTH OF CHARLES
MARTEL, A. D. 700.

FROM that great character whose Christian virtues relieve at length our *retrospective* eye, fatigued by following the fierce barbarians through indiscriminated scenes of blood and slaughter: our English ancestors derived their hopes of happiness in the next world, and of prosperity in this. The Saxons admitted no juries in criminal cases; still less in matters of property; nor was there any action so horrible that it could not be maintained by the sword, or compensated by the purse. Gifts were omnipotent, and made commutation easy to the rich for every offence. *Guilt* satisfied all demands; whence the word *guilty*, as I have heard, in our Old Bailey pleadings. But Pope Gregory, who had before his elevation pitied the poor children set up for sale at Rome, of whom, enquiring whence they came, he said, *non Angli sed angeli*; not Angles, but angels would these boys and girls be called had they but baptism and education; remember'd the pretty slaves he had observed at market, and sent over Augustine, a monk, with some assistant missionaries to England. To dispute whether or not we had at that time a church independent of papal authority, is a mere jest; the bishop of Caerlon upon Uske was, under God, our spiritual overseer, says Spelman; but he was so, I trust, because the island being forgotten and neglected, no other person thought of seeing over them. Gregory the Great never desired rule save for the purpose of exercising beneficence. A shepherd founded Rome at first; a shepherd and pastor now saved it from final ruin; and Gibbon owns what Howell had asserted, that in the fifth,

fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries, the mistress of the world would have been a heap of stones, had not the popes preserved it. How happy had they kept the original character of their station according to this excellent example set them; then as kings have been compared to the lion, *they* might in like manner have resembled the elephant; majestic, grave, and wise, and whilst unoffended, innocuous. Meanwhile his missionaries landed on our coast, where Providence had prepared for their reception the heart of a prince who had just married a beautiful descendant of *Clovis*, and had agreed, with that spirit of toleration which ever marks an Englishman, that she should be allowed free exercise of *her* religion, though differing essentially from his own. The charms of Bertha added their influence to the preaching of Paulinus, domestick chaplain to the young queen's household, who felt himself happy in assistance from these newly arrived *religieux*; and as Canterbury was the place where Ethelbert kept his court, 'twas soon become the scene of his conversion, and then exalted into a bishop's see, where Austin was consecrated primate. London quickly embraced the faith, and St. Paul's cathedral was dedicated with due formality. A church had been built to St. Peter long before, but the last inundation of barbarism then stopt religion's progress: things were maturer now: Northumberland caught the flame of proselytism, and York was made the second residence to Canterbury. The high priest of the pagan superstition next, being from internal and external evidence persuaded of our redemption by Jesus Christ, facilitated the happy credence of an island, destined for the defence of truth in future ages. The Britons fixed in Wales had long been converted, it was the *Angli* whose state of ignorance and slavery affected the pope as he passed through the streets at home. His missionaries however, would not confine their cares to England; but not content to find our Welshmen Christians, insisted on their being Romanists, and just as eager to settle the right day of keeping Easter, as to overturn the worship of Woden, their violence produced resistance on the part of a people already well instructed

instructed in the principles necessary to salvation, and steady to their primitive simplicity. The verses of Talieffin, then bard or poet laureat to Maelgwyn, evince their fixed attention to preserve their spiritual pretensions purchased by long past contest with, and flight from foreign invaders.

Gwae offeririad byd, nys anghreiffia gwydd

An nys Pregetha.

Gwae ny cheidw el Gail ac ef yn fugail

Ac nys areilia.

Gwae ny cheidw ei adefaid rhâg Bleiddie Rhyfeniaid

Ay ffon guwppa.

Woe be to the priest that's born

Who will not duly weed his corn,

And root away the tares ;

Woe to the shepherd that's remiss

In watching of his flock—and is

Unfaithful to his cares ;

Woe be to him who doth not keep

With's crooked staff his harmless sheep

From Romish wolves and snares.

Rowland's Mona Antiqua.

Their refusal of the tonsure however, their abhorrence of the new doctrine of unmarried priesthood, and their rejection of the tenets by which the sacerdotal dresses were considered as of serious importance ; created an antipathy towards them in the monks, who easily incited their Saxon converts to massacre every ancient Briton who yet remained scattered up and down the richer provinces of an island once all their own, and long protected in possession of it by those Romans who now encouraged the invading Saxons to extirpate them. From the state of hopeless servitude those Welsh were placed in, who by infirmity or submission escaped this nearly general destruction, derives the ancient *villénage* we read of : the rightful lords of the country thus becoming its first *villains* or slaves,

slaves, a term in our happier days of mere reproach, both through the kingdom and the principality. But thus we see the seamless coat of Christ, said to have been found about that time in the city Zaphat, afterwards a Turkish residence, and called Sapet; but overthrown in the sixteenth century by an earthquake, inspiring the papists with additional zeal to preserve uniformity by any and by every method, willingly forgetting the adage often repeated by the old fathers of our primitive church, *in veste varietas fit—scissura non fit* ;* but I suppose the colours all were faded. Be this as it may, that sovereignty which will ever be obtained by superiority of knowledge amongst unenlightened nations struggling for information, was here soon settled into monkish influence; and as power will be commonly abused, the possessors of that influence turned it to gainful purposes; what should they else? As *religieux* they could not reign themselves, and when precluded from the nobler passions, avarice, which ever feeds on dross and dregs, devoured well-pleased the leavings of ambition. Obedient Angles paid cheerfully a penny each house to their instructors; a tax known by the name of *Peterpence*: nor can we esteem that a hard one, if it be true that Withred, king of Kent, was able, not long after these occurrences, to pay the king of Wessex a sum in their silver equal to 90,000*l*. Nor does ought in the Saxon chronicles give reason we should doubt it; for though their coins are very mean and paltry, we read of a Northumbrian prelate served in plate not long after the year 700. Of what his *service* consisted, indeed I am at a loss; for silver hilted knives were new at Edward the second's coronation: perhaps he had one silver waiter or a cup. His feet were in the dirt we know, for splendour will come in before convenience; so much more haste man makes to be distinguished than to be happy. The famous church of St. Peter's, Weremouth, built by Benedict Biscopius, was never floored or paved, though people were far fetched from Rome to build it; and

* Let the vesture of our Redeemer exhibit variety of tints, but let no scissars divide the parts.

Eddius says that bishop Wilfrid *glazed* one fine window of a church in Yorkshire as early as 669. The state of musick in these days may be gathered from a story how Putta bishop of Rochester, being driven from his see by Ethelred king of Mercia, in 680, went about the country an itinerant psalm-finger, teaching children, and people disposed to learn, the choral praises of their Maker and his saints, according to the rough melody then in use; acquired probably from France, where Theodoric had, at Clovis's request, long before, sent some of his best performers from Italy. In these days St. Dunstan too was so exquisite a performer, that his harp was accounted celestial, and capable of producing sounds without help of any hand at all: witness the old verses made ages after:

St. Dunstan's harp fast by the wall
Upon a pin did hang—a;
The harp itself with lyre and all,
Untouch'd by hand did twang—a.

And this superstition setting some fly fellow to tune two strings in unison, &c. putting the instrument in a place where the wind blew hard, suggested the idea of Æolus's harp, described by Kircher in *Musurgia*. It was no new discovery in *our* days. But our own island must not engross all powers of *Retrospection*: the plague which raged at Rome may well detain it, perhaps to admire the courage of the pontiff, perhaps in our present humour, to condemn as superstition what scarce could even then have been enough praised as piety. When the meek bishop walked himself in procession, fearless for his safety, along the infected streets, singing devout litanies to heaven, and requesting from God, not requiring from man, cessation of the dire calamity. "While thousands literally fell beside him, and ten thousand at his right hand, yet was he not afraid either for the pestilence that walked in darkness, nor for the sickness that destroyed at the noon day." So did true Christian faith trample indeed upon the adder, and crush the poisonous basilisk under foot. The pathognomic symptom of this disease was sneezing, and 'tis not in Europe totally forgotten. Some still say, God
bless

blefs you, upon fuch occasions; others fignifying the fame intent, commute their prayer with a bow. But fcenes of horror were not confined to Rome. Cofroe the Perfian fpoiled Jerufalem, and maf-facred, I think Cedrenus fays, 90,000 Chriftians; as many Jews had been, in confequence of Sifibetus's edict, *forcibly* baptized the year before. Famines too, confequent perhaps on fuch a lofs of men to till the earth, drove feveral of the laft named race to feek a watery grave, and leap from the high cliffs of Calabria into the fea, rather than ftarve upon its barren fhores; while fomething of a fimilar desperation is recorded of Anglo Saxons on the coaft of Suffex. When I read this to an Italian friend however, and when he asked me why they did not rather go o' fishing? I had no answer ready. Hiftory herfelf is often ill prepared enough when fudden questions interrupt her eloquence; and my poor fummary is willing to confeß as controvertible the truth of many a fact recorded here: but with the facts, except as a compiler, myfelf have nought to do. 'Twas in this century at leaft that Ifidore Hispalenfis wrote *his* books of *Retrospection*, beginning with the earlieft dawn of light, but leaving us in days of fad opacity. And how has that vaporous effect of diftance increafed fince his time! How is the difficulty grown almoft infuperable, of finding through the gloom decided objects on which to fix our mental telescope. My terror is left readers fhould agree to throw it down at once, and think upon this huddled work no more. The ages now under review feem the November of our deftined year; in which we travel through dark ages, and in the abyfs of chaos and old night meet often, as did Satan once, a vaft vacuity;

Or elfe a univerfal hubbub wild
Of ftunning founds and voices all confus'd.

Monfieur de Longuerue, fpeaking on this fubject, fays truly, that the firft kings of his native France were ftrange creatures. *Ils étoient d'étranges gens*, is the expreffion. Clovis and Clothaire (fays he),

Childebert and Dagobert; Cardan should, for *our* sakes, have made their panegyrick instead of Nero's. 'Tis from him we learn however, that St. Cloud was so named after Clodoalde, who, to compensate the grossest possible immoralities, made immense donations to the church, and at some future time was canonized. Clothaire, made king of France at four months old, under the regency of Gontram, duc d'Orleans and the old sinner Brunhault, felt when the short minority was ended (for princes then were at fifteen emancipated) his justice and his power mature. He called his wicked grandmother to trial; and at an age almost advanced to dotage and decrepitude, she was found guilty of the death of ten kings, or at least heirs to royalty; and many accusations of incest and cruelty being added, she was tied by her remaining grey hairs to a wild horse's tail, and gradually kicked in pieces. Her charitable institutions however, when enumerated, tempt some historians to mollify her crimes, and some readers to compassionate such sufferings inflicted by that favourite child, for whose sake many of the sins had been committed.

Clothaire was of a truly savage character: Dagobert his son alone could soften his furious temper; and *he* forced or persuaded him to give up half his power, getting himself created independent sovereign of Metz, with the title of king. The word *duke* had been disgraced by a nobleman of that rank, having submitted to act as preceptor to young Dagobert, who cut off his beard as a punishment for having fate down in his presence—So changed were the manners of princes since the reign of Theodosius!

This Dagobert, when seated upon an uncontrollable throne, overleaped all bounds of decency and honour, and at length tore Natildis, a beautiful young nun, out of her convent and married her, his own wife being yet alive. The bishop Amandus ventured to reprove him, and Dagobert drove him into exile; but on his son's birth called him back to christen the boy *Sigebert*, thinking such virtue in the person who administered baptism would be of some advantage to the child.

So

So small were the benefits accruing to mankind since the disruption of the once firm-set world conglobed under one universal monarch ! But 'tis thus we observe each passion of humanity made subservient to the new dispensation, the great end of Providence, in breaking, dividing, and parcelling out the earth, so long under dominion of a single mind. The huge aspiring tree which once had served as shadow for the whole, although fallen down, still put forth boughs that yet retained some verdure, and in the form of a Greek empire seemed "majestick" "tho' in ruin." A quick succession of those rulers at Constantinople, Priscus and Phillipicus, Mauritius and Commentiolus, with Phocas the centurion, chosen in lieu of Mauritius, a person of fearful aspect as 'tis said ; have scarcely been rescued by their contemporary writers from oblivion, though each was severally invested with the purple. The vices of the times were black and fullen ; accusations of sorcery and magick arts, with unjustifiable severities practised on such as gave suspicion of their future conduct by luckless names perhaps, dreams,* or initials supposed to be inauspicious. The principal virtue was redeeming captives caught up by the Huns, &c. Priscus paid three hundred pounds weight of gold to Chaganus for prisoners he had taken ; and Commentiolus refusing to give five shillings each, of our present money, for a large lot of them, a rebellion was the consequence. The Pope said, if he had not had three thousand monks to feed daily out of his own privy purse, he could have bought more souls to orthodoxy ; for his exalted station would not permit him to imitate the famous bishop of Nola, who, having nothing left to purchase captives, at last *pawned himself* ; and by that stretch of heroism, to a poor widowed mother of mean rank restored her only son. The Croats, struck with such unequivocal signs of a truly charitable spirit, gave good Paulinus almost all he asked, and sent him home at the head of a small army of unpaid-for countrymen. But ecclesiastical, like Augustan

* Phillipicus was exiled for *dreaming* that he was an emperor.

history, teems with strange tales, incredible almost to us, who live in days of more regularity than adventure; while wonder glows up to admiration one moment, and disgust evaporates into contempt another. Yet now and then

Bright angel forms athwart the solemn dusk,
And voices more than human thro' the void
Deep founding, seize th'enthusiastick ear.

Sabinian now succeeded to the popedom, and dying, left the see vacant eleven months. Of Boniface III. 'tis best worth noting, that he obtained an imperial grant confirming his supremacy, likewise a claim to exclude other bishops from the title of pope: till then the word was not confined to one.* Guthrie dates all their power from *that* day, but Gibbon sets it earlier. In Diodati's time a marriage with godson or mother was made criminal; and although guilt in every possible modification infested the Christian world, this pontiff thought the dreadful earthquake which shook all its Italy to its foundation, was sent in punishment of some such nuptials. Such were the ideas, such the state of Rome. England, more rational, records a decree made about that time, that no bishop should keep glee-maids, *citharædes ne quecumque symphoniaca*, to sing him to sleep, or play to him on the harp after he was in bed. Such was the state of morals, when looking back we may observe, that as political life seemed never tired of multiplying its petty objects of divided attention, religion on the contrary simplified apace, and hastened to a fixed position, finishing all worship in a single point. Mankind apparently grew weary of kneeling to works of their own hands, wood and stone. Whilst they could be persuaded that these idols did actually represent some celestial agent, *æon*; divinity or emanation of invisible power, veneration was easily supposed their due; but when the mere creature was expected

* 'Tis so in Russia still.

to occupy the whole of the adorer's mind, the meanest of those minds felt half repelled, and was without difficulty attracted to a more intelligent mode of preferring petitions to Providence. Thus disposed, the world divided quickly into three opinions; the Athanasian doctrine, the Arian system, and the Mahometan imposture: nor could Paganism stand its ground at all, which once had filled the earth with fancied deities innumerable. Of the others something has already been told, the third claims more than a glance of *Retrospection*. Of this sect then, of this religion rather, the very extraordinary founder was born of idolatrous parents at Mecca in Arabia Felix, an old town, half consecrate to unity of godhead; where the retreat of Hagar is still shewn, and Ishmael's fountain watering the square is dedicated to truth. There the numerous servants of a rich merchant's widow, Cadiga, commanded Mahomet as slave to the house; and her eye alone discerned his superior genius through all the disadvantages of situation. Yet though to his marriage all future advancement was originally owing, his laws, when promulgated, sunk the female sex so low in the scale of creation, that their state in the east just forms a shade between mankind and brutes. Cadiga's choice justified no such degradation: she was persuaded he had some peculiar communication with the world of spirits, and when apprized of his immense designs, she saw him fall in real or pretended trances, her heart would not permit her to doubt or to deny that they were caused by oppression of angelic presence. Christians have called these perturbations upon commencement of his celebrity mere epileptic fits; but as we hear no more of them at all, either when he fled before his new-raised enemies,* or when he drove before his conquering army all who opposed his new-formed legislature; I rather think they were a true and forcible impression on the brain, heated to agony by hopes and fears, of what he wished and what he dared to do, operating upon an ima-

* Whence Turks date all events from Hegira or the Flight.

gination naturally combustible. The Turks have to this hour an uncommon and peculiar veneration for *madmen*, among whom Mahomet, had he only *projected* his future elevation, must have been ranked: but action, business, bustle, soon kept every moment employed, and to such energy of character such plans were alone proportionate; till not Cadiga alone, but Mecca herself, received the slave born under her protection as lord and lawgiver; sole sovereign in this world and in the next, mediator between God and man. The Jews call his religion *Ishmaelism*, with no great impropriety. He was a Koraites himself, descended from Korai or Koraiish, a son of Ishmael; the noblest of their tribes, but fallen into decay. His avowed purpose was to re-establish the worship of their patriarch, and abolish plurality of gods. His earliest followers pushed the new principles into what has been since called Spinozism, but they were known by name of Zendikites, believing God to be the four elements, and denying Providence and the resurrection, having mingled some Zoroastrian tenets with those of Mahomet. He then found it necessary to publish his Koran, and proclaim his code of laws, which he maintained by his sword so well, that thousands fell before his conquering arm. That he was assisted in compiling the Alcoran, &c. by a Nestorian monk, may or may not be true; it takes but little from that amazing power of invention displayed in the story of Misra, or his journey to the seven heavens, performed in the tenth part of one night, borne on the beast Alborak to Jerusalem, and thence conducted by the angel Gabriel through six inferior heavens to God's throne. Astronomy was at a low ebb then we find; for from the first heaven of pure silver, he saw the stars hang down in golden chains, as they do in Homer, and each star was large as *Mount Nobo*; but Adam there, on seeing *him*, gave God thanks for so great a son, and shewed him the rarities of the place, among which the radiant chandelier shines brightest, when stretching his white neck up to the second heaven, he claps his rubied wings and crows aloud: heard by his fellow birds on earth they answer him, and sing the matin song,

song, pleasing to God. Next in the golden stage Noah presides. An angel of death, there described with wonderful sublimity, spins, draws, and cuts our thread of life, like the three sisters in pagan mythology. A heaven of adamant serves as the residence of Moses. Jesus dwells all in divine light, and to *his* prayers Mahomet *commends himself*; the others all press him to pray for *them*. Once arrived however at the throne of Omnipotence, he heard these words, which to impress upon his followers' minds was indeed the whole bent of his mission—*There is but one God* (said the voice), *and Mahomet is his prophet*. The sentence was besides delivered to him written, upon the skin of that same ram which Abraham offered in exchange for his son. So does the subtle Ishmaelite against his will acknowledge the progeny of his preferred brother *Isaac*, and the merit of his typical sacrifice; although the first tenet of Mahometanism teaches that Jesus was a prophet, not a Christ; nor in any wise to be called or considered as *Son of God*.

Concerning other parts of this extraordinary Misra, Hali and Omar split into two sects, the first who married Fatima the Impostor's daughter, seems to have been the lawful successor; his motto was, *I adore God with a sincere heart*. Omar however caused him to be assassinated; and that great Caliph 'twas who took Jerusalem, which then was given up to infidels for four hundred years; he conquered Issigerdes, and put an end to that dynasty, finishing likewise the old Persic, or Perezic superstition. They had worshipped the sun since Zoroaster's time, fourteen centuries at least. Perez means the sun; they were Perezians, or Persians, now no more: 'twas time they were destroyed. The monster Cosroc had sacked Jerusalem not twenty years before, killing innumerable Jews, Christians, all he found; and carried Zachary, the primate, and the cross of Christ away. He flayed his own general, Sain, alive, and strewed him over with salt; he profaned the temple of the sun, and tried to make his soldiers worship *him* in it. The emperor, Heraclius, defeated him however, and he, too old to make more head, appointed his youngest son as successor.

Siroe

Siroe enraged at that, as being eldest, killed *all* his brothers in his father's fight, who died of parental pain ninety-eight years old, remembering how himself had served Hormisdas. Siroe, the son, reigned but a short time, and 'twas his successor Isdigerdes that lost that country to the Saracens. Meanwhile the Exarch of Ravenna, concluding that his sovereign would find employment in these eastern wars, set himself up for king of Italy, without success indeed; he lost his head, and it was sent off to Constantinople, whither young Theodore, the Emperor's brother, was just returned from recovering the cross, carried for show of more respect by Heraclius himself, and placed with no small pomp at poor Jerusalem, which in eight years afterwards was lost irretrievably to all-subduing Omar. 'Twas strange however, that a Christian Prince who had himself on that occasion borne home the cross of Christ in a procession, should in a little time so heat his fancy as to think he who suffered on it a mere phantom, raised by Omnipotence for purposes of our salvation. This heresy of the Docetes owed its endurance (nor went it without punishment and heavy censure) chiefly, if not wholly to the just abhorrence in which true Catholics must ever hold the contrary extreme; maintained at first by Ebionites, who early learned a bold denial of their Saviour's godhead, and limitation of his powers; and which opinion, modified by Arius, drew after it innumerable seceders from our church.

Among the Lombard dissenters, the story of Ariowaldus here deserves a glimpse of *Retrospection*. He had a chamberlain, his name Adolphus, whom the young queen, fair Gundibert, commending for his uncommon beauty; this bold youth supposed her passionately in love with him, and offered caresses, which she repulsed with such disdain as to provoke his malice and resentment. Ariowaldus was soon informed his wife was false, and those who had accused her of adultery, added a feigned conspiracy agreed upon with Tasso, governor of Tuscany, to poison her husband. The lady was imprisoned, but at request of Clothaire, king of France, the Lombard leader granted her
a cham-

a champion, the first I read of; and her near kinsman, Aribert, accepting the office, disarmed the groom, who now confessed his guilt, and said, her spitting in his face incensed him. Aribert was a catholic—the Arian Prince seeing him victorious in the duel was converted, and Gundibert restored to favour, after four years imprisonment, *for having been suspected*, though unjustly. To Ariowaldus Rotharis succeeded; he took Oderzo, then called Opitergium, and was the first of these who ruled by written laws; till his reign they repeated by memory what was called edicts of the Lombard justice, discountenancing all but active virtue, and scorning all but oral knowledge. Meanwhile the names of Marcello and Grimaldi grace the Venetian records, though Fortunatus, an Arian bishop of Aquileia, took some towns from them, and forced the young republick to request succours from Constantinople. The Emperor, to repair their losses, sent them a present of *St. Mark's chair* from Alexandria, where, to say truth, few rarities remained; and Omar now had burned the famous library, containing treasures of science, relicks of ancient learning, all that escaped from Gothick fury, while the great work of separation still went forward; Spain assumed in some respects the form *we* see it in; our own kingdom was a settled heptarchy, and Lent was rigidly observed in England, where Cambridge boasts enlargement by king Sigibert. Warton says too, that we possessed a Homer—the pope Vitalian, sent us here a prelate, rich in sound literature and valuable books: he had the homilies of good St. Chrysostome, he had Josephus too, and Warton does say his Homer was written on *paper*. Adrian, who came over with him, brought us two filken palls, and an arch chanter from Naples, and Bale very seriously censures our *voluptuousness*. But these events, although considerable in their effects on civil and on social life, are far too faint to hold the eye of *Retrospection* fixed on *them*, while giant forms come forward on our canvas, and names all new to fame fill her wide trumpet's mouth, which will resound with Othman and Abdallah, Hali and Saladin, down to the fullen echoes of latest posterity. Mesopotamia

conquered, Ægypt subdued, Arabia all astonished, Antioch reduced, and a new mosque built at Jerusalem for the Mahometan worship, might have made men justly regret their long-lost Bibles, where would have been soon found the prophecy of locusts by Joel, who lived near 800 years *before* and revelations of strange visions shown St. John 96 years *after* our Saviour's æra. Such pens alone could possibly describe this cloud of warriors as they rolled along, blackening the sun with their numbers, and afflicting the earth with their oppression, scorpions from the sandy deserts, stinging mankind to madness. "A fire devour-eth before them, and behind them a flame burneth; the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; the earth shall quake, the heavens shall tremble, and before their face the people shall be much pained." So are they described by the prophet. St. John's visionary view of these invaders colours, has fixed interpretation upon *them*; for I saw, says he, the horses and those who sat thereon; having breast-plates of fire, of jacinth, and of brimstone; the heads of their horses are as the heads of lions, and they have a leader over them whose name is *the destroyer*. Scholars assure us, that such were in fact the decorations of these Saracens in war; and that flame colour and pale yellow were their distinguishing colours in the battle. A strict investigation of their leader's name might possibly throw light on that enquiry. I never heard the etymology of Mohammed. His followers' appellations were nearly Jewish. Jussuff and Ibrahim are scarcely changed from Abraham and Joseph; Solyman and Zara have suffered still less alteration from the scripture names Sarah and Solomon; Turkish Abdalla means servant of God we know; and *Abdiel* has the same sense appropriated to it in Hebrew. Milton, ever attentive to learning, makes the reception of his faithful angel, so called, echo his name; when a voice from the throne pronounces the hoped-for sentence—*Servant of God*, well done, &c.

Pope Severinus was said to have died of grief at hearing the progress made by these Saracens, though others say his health was most impaired by the Emperor's refusal to confirm him in the see, because

because he set his face against Monothelites. His predecessor, Honorius, had before this covered St. Peter's church with brass tiles, torn from the temple of Romulus; and Vitalian, who sent us the arch chanter, had in his zeal for musick set up organs in several places of worship at Rome. Yet were things still in a rugged state. Eugenius IV. who acted as vicar for unhappy Martin, did build indeed some sacerdotal prisons, that priests, if guilty of a misdemeanour, might not be confounded with common felons: yet Martin, a Tuscan pontiff, was, in despite of decency, seized by the Exarch, upon an order from Pyrrhus, banished, and starved to death for having opposed him and his emperor, Constans, when they persisted in the heretical opinion of the Docetes. A patriarch of Constantinople thus insulting St. Peter's successor, was certainly not soon, if ever quite forgotten: and Theodore, in his short papacy, wrote the anathema of the bold Pyrrhus, with a pen dipt in the eucharistick cup, the cup of general blessing; by this we learn at least, that the wine was red then; the Romanists use white now, and I think mix that with water. Meanwhile the emperors, enfeebled by domestick quarrels, for Constans reigned but by severities practised upon his guilty aunt Martina, who lost her nose and tongue for plots and poisonings, grew daily weaker; while the fierce Saracens increased in strength. Among their various exploits, our *retrospective* eye now sees the old Colossus of Rhodes fall before these invaders, who sold the bright Apollo to a Jew; and he, loaded, 'tis said, nine hundred camels with its no longer waste solidity. Thus ended the sixth wonder of the world—thus dropt at once from its preposterous elevation, the now more than ever inanimate mass of paganism, and sunk before the unity of godhead. Christians believed the end of all was near; and Gregory meditated desertion from his imperial seat, invested by these warriors apparently irresistible: his plan was to have retired to Syracuse, soon to be called Messina, but all the people rose up and detained him. Callinicus, a Greek priest, on this occasion found or revived the dreadful plague of wild-fire, and with it burned their fleet in the

Propontis. Africa, next invaded, gave itself up again a conquered province : Spain, Sicily, and Asia's best possessions followed ; but no distresses cured the Greek emperors of exercising senseless cruelties on their own family : Gregory killed his brother Theodosius, only because he thought the people loved him ; and they justly considered this fratricide more black, as Theodosius was a priest and deacon, and the Emperor had only a week before received the blessed sacrament at his hand. Seeing their fixed dislike, he flew to Sicily, having made momentary peace with the Saracens ; and there his chamberlain or page assassinated him. A successor, Mezentius, chosen by the army, was quickly killed by a new Constantine, called Pogonatus ; because, having no beard when he went to Sicily he brought one home with him to Constantinople ; having first cut off his two brothers' noses, that they might not be called to share that power he was unable to defend, although the *ignis græcus* stood him in good stead, having destroyed thirty thousand Saracens at once in some great sea engagement. Broke down by foreign losses, he however resolved to think no more about the popedom, and signified to Benedict II. successor to Adeodatus, Donus, Agatho and Leo, all exemplary characters ; that the election of supreme bishop at Rome should still stand good, whether or not confirmed by *mandate* from *Constantinople*. This decree contributed to cause, not cure, confusion : the Exarch of Ravenna now chose *one* pope, the people another : disgraceful scenes and sharp debates, called the ninth schism, followed ; till Conon was inaugurated, and on *his* death Sergius was forced, with 100 lbs. weight of gold, to buy a *just* election, and appease Paschal the petty tyrant of Romagna. This Sergius was the first who ordered the Blessed Virgin's nativity to be kept holy, and added these words to the communion service—" Oh " Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world ;" keeping by this means Monothelites and Docetes out of the church, and obliging Christian people to reflect, that their Redeemer, though perfect God, was perfect man too, of the substance of his mother born in the world, when thus her birth-day was commanded to be held holy.

Justinian

Justinian, successor to Pogonatus, disgraced the purple, not only by cutting off the noses, and thrusting out the eyes of his opponents, but finally, by having his own face disfigured by Leontius, who afterwards ended his life in a halter, while Justinian III. not disposed to hide, as it was hoped, his ugliness in a monastery, after death of Tiberius Abdimarus reigned again; till now the birth of Charles Martel at Paris, gives us a glimpse of nascent civilization and recovering decorum, towards the year 700. Yet even *then* was Europe threatened with fresh calamity, the Normans, or Norwegians, bursting in full tides on France, retarded their felicity, and suggested to them a new deprecatory sentence, which they added to their litanies, and said—"From plague, pestilence, and fury of the Normans, good Lord deliver us." With this sad and necessary petition we will close this long chapter; for now Pomponius Lætus leaves us, all is dark and cheerless, and like the embarrass'd knight in some old castle, when his sole lamp is blown out with a sudden wind, we wander over moss-grown fragments, watching deceitful lights through ivy'd crevices, yet stepping cautiously; for though our last faint glimmering guide is gone, readers will laugh, not pity when we stumble.

CHAP. XII.

FROM BIRTH OF CHARLES MARTEL, A. D. 700. TO
CHARLEMAGNE, A. D. 800.

AN incomplete history is a poor thing, says the Jesuit Le Moine, and a complete history, adds he, shall not appear but in that year which shall discover the perpetual motion and the philosopher's stone. We say with equal truth, a perfect summary of events and circumstances since the Christian æra would be, although a useful, no very splendid or respectable performance, while an imperfect one is good for little indeed. We promised only *Retrospection*, and even that grows difficult of performance. Yet a word must be said concerning language, that first gift of God, created single, but afterwards, to punish our misuse, broken into an endless variety. The early scheme of politics however, while the supreme command lodged in a single breast, tended in some measure to synthesize what had been suddenly and preternaturally decomposed; and when the spirit of Omnipotence again descended 2250 years after, 'tis thought the variety was much diminished, by numbers crowding round one vast metropolis, as Nineveh or Rome. The last of these having subdued Greece, grew easily enamoured of the lovely captive, admired the arts and elegant speech of their newly incorporated citizens, and polished their old language by these models, till the tongue spoken 150 years before Cicero's time could hardly, in the days of Antonine, be understood without a comment; witness the *columna rostrata* set up to commemorate the deeds of Duilius in the second Punic war, with an inscription puzzling common observers, of which bishop Walton gave a copy and explanation not very long ago; but as the Romans took a tincture of the Greek expression into theirs, so they bestowed in return, corruption to that

tongue

tongue which Aristotle taught, and Xenophon adorned ; till at last, mixing with various nations, and suffering barbarians to break in upon them from unknown, unintelligible regions, the Latin language sunk into decay ; *le* and *lo* came in as abbreviations of *ille* and *illo*, giving the modern cast to speech that daily grew more and more crouded with articles, whilst *us* being cut away from the ends of proper names by Apocope, Theodoric stood for Theodoricus, &c. giving them a Ghaelic termination. Abbreviating words is still a mark of illiterate grossness in Italy, where Tuscans tell how a foreigner observed that bread was called *pane* at Florence, at Milan *pan*, at Turin *pa*, at Brescia *p* only : I shall, says he, lose my bread entirely if I go further northward, we drop a letter almost every stage. But we return to the eighth century, when Greek, by the translation as we term it of Rome to Constantinople for so many years, began to lose her superiority, and sink into vulgar use ; while the bad Latin lately introduced, became the court language, and the law language, and kept the command where it did not deserve the dominion. Thus like a pure stream turned through a reedy pool stagnant and mantling, a portion of the polluted mass remained, vulgarizing that currency of flowing speech that had charmed Tully's ear, and excited Virgil's emulation : till Crusius, in the true spirit of a scholar, said that it would even pity a man's heart to see poor Athens, once so renowned for eloquence and learning, become the very head quarters of barbarous and corrupt philology. Crusius indeed, lived not till the sixteenth century, and we have now the eighth under reviewal, when Greek was still a living language to the Arabs. The accounts of their caliph's treasury and household were kept in Greek then ; the library of Saxe Gotha shows many rarities of this kind, and proves, from Reinesius's collection of valuable MSS. that in the year 758, Homer and Pindar were translated by the studious Ishmaelites, while *Frankis speche is calt Romance, so sai clerks et men of France*. Till knowledge, like a well-pieced statue of antiquity was once more broken again, not in the old places merely, but in many other parts till then uninjured. Fragments were however here
and

and there picked up; Morienus, a hermit near Jerufalem, wrote on the tranfmutation of metals; Boerhaave fays it was tranflated *into Latin* about the year 1182. Some few devotional tracts poorly written, perpetuate the name of an old Saxon monk or two; and fome *romances*, to the reading of which Damafcius, who lived under the laft Juftinian, had given mankind a tafte by his four books of Incredibilities; for fo fuch things were called, till towards the period we are treating of, they acquired the name *romant*, perhaps from having been compofed in the court dialect of the original metropolis, ruined as 'twas; in contradiftinction to the Walloon or Gaulifh dialect. We are told of a fynod fuppreffing fome of thefe romances very early, as being too loofely written: they were the compofition of fome bifhop of Tricca, who was informed that he muft either burn his book publicly, or renounce his church dignities; like a true author, he preferred the laft.* That fome derive the word from *romanfero*, *I invent or find*, in old Spanifh; (whence troubadours or finders) few are ignorant; but fcholars muft inform us whether that word was early enough incorporated into Caftilian diction for fuch an etymology to be poffible. On my epitome indeed, fcholars will fcarcely be induced to look: 'tis from their labours that I light my little twift of fwift-confuming candle to guide fuch only as have juft curiofity enough to wifh, and juft time enough to try for a glimpfe of *Retrospection*. That glimpfe difcovers Cracow in Poland ftarting up early in this 8th century, and named after Cracus, a noble Pole, chofen king by the people, becaufe he alone was found able to deftroy a wild beaft which, living in a cave (ftill fhown to travellers) burft out at call of hunger from time to time, and did incredible mifchief; till this bold leader conquered him by stratagem, ftuffing the fkin of a dead calf with fome poisoned force meat, which the monfter greedily devouring, died. This feems a relapfe into the old ftate of fabulous anti-

* This fear poffeffing the mind of Caftañeda, who lived in 1547, he made him a book of afbestos for fear of the inquifition: it contained an account of his travels to eaft India. Grouchy tranflated it from Portugeze to French, but it was little worth that trouble.

quity; but I suppose Poland now was hardly as near civilization as Crete was at the time when Theseus killed the minotaur. Spain, scarcely less barbarous, saw about that period Roderick the Visigoth, put out his father's eyes; and Julian, so justly called the traitor, fetch in the Saracens who over-run the country, persecuted the Christian religion, and so completely settled in their kingdom, that it took six centuries at least to drive them out: all were not gone till 1492. The Pope and the Venetians were amused meantime by reciprocating presents of reliques and of palls, and *trying* to keep peace between the contending bishops of Grada and Aquileia. While the young Duke of Frisia, a new convert, requested baptism, which was preparing, but as he put his first leg into the font, having unluckily asked where they supposed his late good father was—an exemplary prince; and the unfeeling priests bluntly replying—*Why in hell to be sure!* Radbold was shocked, and not proceeding further with the ceremony, enquired again concerning some old ancestor of eminence for virtue, although ignorant of Christian obligation—receiving the same unqualified answer then, *that all were damned*; he drew his leg quickly out of the water, protesting he preferred, in the next world, *their* company to that of men so harsh and so intolerant. The story says he died in three days after. While Venda, princess of Polonia refused all conversation on religious subjects; and when hard pressed, to avoid further controversy devoting herself to her own pagan deities, flew to the river's brink, and headlong dashed into the Vistula. She was daughter to the monster Tamer, whose two sons killing each other, left the realm to Venda their sister, who by this rashness ended the short dynasty.* A Syrian impostor now

* Venda flew from disputes to death; but she fled from tongue disputants only: in contests she better understood, Rittogarus, a German Prince, acknowledged her superiority: He had invaded her dominions under pretence of her having broken a contract of marriage with him; but the Amazonian dame defended herself so well, and defeated his troops so shamefully, that unable to endure the disgrace of flying from a woman in battle, he stabbed himself in the field.

prevailed on many to think him the Messiah ; he persuaded Ifgird the Saracen to pull down images, promising that prince a reign of forty years. Ifgird set bravely to work, but dying the tenth day by hand of an assassin, his son in revenge stabbed the impostor on the spot. This was not the wretch called Eon or D'Eon, a very proper appellation for dubious and mysterious characters. Jortin mentions one so called, but subsequent to this, four centuries at least, who set himself up for the Son of the Most High ; but these were days of darkness, and meteors, kindled by putrefying credulity, were easily mistaken for stars. Such was the melancholy state of general knowledge, that a priest of no small dignity did, in Bavaria, christen a proselyte *in nomine patria et filia et spirita sancta*. Some one who had more scholarship told the Pope on't, requesting that the person should be rebaptized ; but Zachary said it was no matter, the clergyman was orthodox and meant well. Meanwhile Gervilius, who had committed murder with impunity, was deprived and imprisoned for keeping a tame hawk. England seemed to enjoy more illumination than Mentz in this century however ; while venerable Bede gave us a bright example of blameless conduct, and of calm research into the deep-hidden stores of learning. Ceolfrid his tutor walked to Rome to get books for him, yet his chief care was about the proper day for keeping Easter. The pupil's fancy was not so restrained : his beautiful description of hell has been supposed to have been read with care by Milton and by Dante ; where he tells how a Northumberland monk died, and came back to life ; but in the interval a young man in shining apparel appeared to him, and silently led him to a deep valley, one side formed of an entire sheet of flames, the other, enormous glaciers of piled up snow and ice. The restless souls with which the valley swarmed, were everlastingly shifting sides. This valley ended in a plain of solid fire we read : a large well in the midst, spouting flames up to the high vaulted roof ; this fountain surrounded too by daemons who drew delinquents in, with fiery forks, whilst the reflux and fierce volcano forc'd them up again.

I have

I have seen a picture of Old Frank representing *Hela's* drear abode much in this manner; the name too is Runic: Italians, and the nations near, all say Inferno; but painters are obliged to Bede for another common subject, as Marvillianiana tells. *He* first, dissenting on the three kings offering, observed that Melchior being old and having a long beard, presented gold to Christ as King; Gaspar being young, brought frankincense to him as God; and Balthazar, of dark complexion, made his tender of myrrh as to a man of woes.* They are thus represented almost in every picture through the world even now; but after a laborious life well spent, exciting and communicating those ideas which, springing up in such a mind, fertilized all around him; our venerable Bede expired in 735, I think, and a poor pupil of his being desirous to compose an epitaph worthy so valuable a personage, and finding after long study, that

Hæc sunt in fossa
Bede presbyteri ossa,

was no good verse, he resolved (as a likely method) to fast till he had found one; when having been much troubled in his sleep, the word *venerabilis* came luckily into his head; whereupon he waking, finished the nicely accomplished work with

Hæc sunt in fossa
Bede venerabilis ossa.

It was then but fair that he should go to breakfast; yet was it to that silly accident, Calvisius thinks, that the honourable appellation was bestowed which our sage had so seriously deserved.

Such were the times with us and with the Germans, while the gay Franks enlarged their wide domain, improved their language, refined their manners, and were governed in much happiness and daily

* There is a manuscript in the Harleian collection resolving the story of the three Kings into alchemy. They offer'd Christ, 'tis said, the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms. The incense must have been *musk* by that explanation.

encreasing splendour by the famed Maire du Palais, Charles *Martel*, surnamed so from his *martial* qualities, which inspired him, after acting the part of an illustrious general, by conquering Saxons, Bavarians, and a long *et cetera*, to seize upon Provence and Burgundy, and defying Rainfroi to single combat, put all upon the issue—and after his victory to rule the conquered nations with prudence; for Charles Martel, although never king, bore sway more absolute than ever king did, while Pepin's fame was lost in his superior blaze, and no man's sword surpass'd his long-remember'd hammer.* Mayor of Paris was his only title; but mayor, or major, or *greatest* in every sense, was the fit title for so active and ardent a character. He instituted the Order of Genette in honour of his wife, whose name Janette he took delight in perpetuating; and when Pope Gregory III. and he corresponded, the pontiff put *his own name last*. A new dynasty however begins in Pepin I. of the Carolingians, who lost his sister to Odilo duke of Bavaria, but retook her, and subdued her hasty lover; while the emperors of the west, if such they might now be called, amused themselves with knocking down images instead of enemies, obtaining the soubriquet of Iconoclastes rather than heroes or legislators. They had to lament besides a great destruction among their subjects, who dropt down struck by pestilence, as their images fell before struck by the axe, and the priests cried—A judgment! but in vain. Luitprand, now wearied with the sight of exarchical tyranny, drove Eutychius the eunuch from his usurpation at Ravenna, and so the seventh form of government ceased, after remaining in force one hundred and eighty-two years. The popedom is the last. See chap. xvii. of St. John's Apocalypse, 10th and 11th verses. “For there are *seven* rulers; “five are fallen, and *one is*, and the other is not come; and when he “cometh he will continue but a short space. And the beast which “was and is not, even he is the *eighth*, and is of the seven, and goeth “into perdition.” St. John wrote under the *emperors*. The first five

* Some say he was so named of his battle-axe, which resembled that instrument; but *martel* was not the French word for a hammer in 750.

forms of government were past: the exarchate did, as he prophesied, continue but a short space: the papacy came last. That all referred to Rome we have the angel's word; for says he, "The woman that thou seest is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth." Kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, triumvirs, emperors, exarchs, popes, were the eight rulers that he saw in vision, I suppose. Eight has been always a marked number.* Eight souls were saved from universal destruction at the Flood, and eight more (of which those were perhaps a type) we see appointed to preach salvation to the newly regenerated world after our Saviour's death. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, James, Jude, Peter and Paul, are the men whose writings have within them the key of our salvation. Their works were however strangely neglected, and I might almost say forgotten, in the savage century now under *Retrospection*, when a council held somewhere in Germany prohibited the eating of horse-flesh among Christians, and cutting off the ears and tail of cattle yet alive for men's meat. Slitting noses was a common practice. Ansprand, the Lombard prince, had a son whose eyes were thrust out by Aripert his rival; almost in mercy that he should not see his mother and his sisters' noses slit, so as completely to divide the feature into two equal parts. The Greek emperor Justinian's predecessor, Leontius, had his face thus disfigured by Abdimarus, who reigned seven years; and while the Saracens were wasting Romandiola and preparing to besiege Constantinople, these infatuated rulers of what they called the world, introduced a new custom of kissing the Pope's toe. A Syrian pontiff, Constantine by name, first suffered the ceremony to be performed at Nice, A. D. 710, by Justinian III. His successors of course continued it. And Stephanus III. a Roman pope, was borne upon men's shoulders with new and extraordinary pomp. Nor did he rest contented with mere show, having

* We find the caliph Motassem long afterwards, A. D. 850, assuming the name of *Ostionary*, upon this not quite expired principle of eight being a lucky number. That its good fortune referred to scripture reasons originally, Mr. Gibbon will not inform us of course.

obtained no fewer than twenty-two cities from Pepin king of France, by threatening him with damnation on refusal. Fleury himself blames this proceeding, and says 'twas actual robbery, no better. But every thing continued to swell the now returning tide of Roman greatness, which soon drove Astolpho forcibly from the Romagna, and possessing itself of Corsica, Parma, Rhegio, Mantua, with the duchies of Spoleto and Benevento, grew up into a solid and formidable power; whilst on the other hand Mahometanism inundated all Persia and Armenia, threatening the empire's capital, where Leo Isaurus reigned twenty-four years, father to Constantine Copronymus,* whom he married to the beautiful and wise daughter of Chaganus the Hunne. She was converted and baptized by name of Irene; but Leo, though an orthodox believer, was warm in the belief of forcery, and scourged an officer of state almost to death for not condemning to die three hapless wretches accused of making a child, whom they never saw, deaf and dumb; and if such follies prevailed near to the seat of empire, well might our northern climates be infected.

Franckfort upon the Main was built about this time, and Cimbric Chersonesus grew better known as *Denmark*, divided into two dukedoms Blaking and *Hallant*, while Scotland exhibited scenes of tragical distress from Fergus their king's loose conduct, and the bitter revenge of his too jealous queen, who strangled him in his sleep, nor would confess her savage cruelty till many innocent subjects had been tortured. When her own favourite was brought forward to examination, she however owned her guilt, took all upon herself, and ended the dreadful drama by suicide. Their nearest neighbours followed the fell example, and Brithric, a king of Wesssex, as I remember, was poisoned by his wife Edburga.† This horrible event had indeed no consequences; for

* So called from an accident which happened to the font whilst the infant prince was baptizing.

† Edburga meant the poison for her rival, and the king took it by mistake; yet such was the Saxons' horror of this crime, they made a law immediately that no female should reign in *their* country.

Egbert, sole surviving descendant of the old race, who boasted their descent from Woden, now was called from France, and considered as chief of the Saxon heptarchy. Stern in the field, and subtle in the closet, that prince vanquished them that opposed, and baffled those that conspired against him. The Britons in Cornwall and the ever hardy Northumbrians seem to have held out longest, but at length all submitted, and Egbert reigned sole monarch, being solemnly crowned king of Angle Land or England, by which name our nation has ever since been known. But Wales, protected by its mountains, remained unsubdued: and Egbert, though a wise and valiant, was I conceive a truly illiterate sovereign, over a people yet so generally unlearned, that an eclipse was reckoned ominous among 'em, and an idea of witchcraft poisoned that peace of mind which privation of luxury ought to have bestowed.

Incapable of intellectual pleasures, our unwatched nobles however rioted in sensual indulgence; and social sorrows being then unknown, they wept misfortunes caused by inevitable necessity as the work of some secret enemy, and punished an innocent neighbour for magick, if the heir of a great house became deformed or sickly: the bad Being was thought to have, and to exert prodigious power in opposition to the good one; who now and then restored a man to life by miracle, the grand proof of his superiority. All this was oriental superstition; but every thing shews that resurrection of a human body is accounted the greatest, as most desired, stretch of power. Medea's kettle, (a Chaldean incantation, as I've read) and Odin's song, all labour to effect that purpose. Abdalla the Saracen, indeed, set his face resolutely against these whimsies, and prohibited the study of demonology; nor can we deny that, after the calamities sustained by literature in consequence of those incursions which overwhelmed learning and almost common sense; the Arabs led the way to light again, and the star once more shone from the eastern world. The caliphs now procured Greek writers, which were translated into Arabick; not poets, except
Homer,

Homer, which Edeffenus, a Maronite astronomer, rendered into Syriack in 770; nor orators, for what had a Bassa to do with Athenian exclamations in praise of liberty! Political reading interested them still less, and ethicks were superseded by the Koran. Mathematical, metaphysical, and physical knowledge, was however not unwelcome, and Boerhaave has borne testimony to the exactness of Jeber's experiments; but we return to our summary. Alphonso of Spain resumed the long dormant title of Catholicus; he drove out Arianism from his dominions, to which he added newly recovered Navarre, and many valuable towns in Portugal. His son Froila was the first who, abbreviating the title Dominus, changed it to Dom or Don; but Poland yet remained far, far behind. When Lescus Primislaus died, who had succeeded upon the self-destruction of Venda, a controversy arose concerning the succession; nor could the diet, for there was a diet then, contrive a more equitable mode of decision than that of erecting a pillar on a high plain, and fixing likewise the starting post, they next issued a proclamation for all candidates to repair thither, and whoever should gallop first to the column on a given morning, was to receive the crown as his reward. Many nobles prepared to run for such a plate, and one of them named Lescus, cousin to the last king, having, says the story, shod his horse *with iron*, a new invention, and throwing little spiked balls like hedge-hogs out of his pocket to embarrass and retard his competitors, won the race; but a young man keeping close to his side, discerned the fraud, and Lescus was condemned to be torn to pieces by four wild horses; and did not, like Darius Hyftaspes ten centuries before, obtain a kingdom by his mean deceits. 'Tis strange that such a method of election should have been twice adopted by mankind; nor can we suspect the Poles of imitation. They had, I think, never heard of the occurrence as 'tis related in the Persian history, so that the fancy must have been original the second time as well as the first. Let its repetition reconcile those who read on't to quiet acquiescence in hereditary right; since people who try to hinder God

Almighty

Almighty from appointing them a ruler, only put their choice as it appears into the power of their horse. About that period was built or repaired; for it was Seleucia* before, the well-known city of Bagdat, and distant far, and far less famous, was founded our beautiful cathedral of Wells, in Somersetshire, dedicated to St. Andrew. Valois seems to think that 'twas about this time Isnard, a monk, wrote his martyrology, a book esteemed in that day, and despised in this beyond its real standard of desert. An odd thing too was related and believed near this period—how a stone coffin was dug up in Thrace, containing a man's body quite entire—this inscription lying on his bosom, in characters completely legible, *Christus nascetur ex Virgine Mariâ, et ego credo in eum. Sub Constantino et Irene imp. O sol! iterum me videbis.* “Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, and I believe in him. Oh sun! thou shalt see me again under the reign of Constantine and Irene.” That hour was arrived, and Leo their son, was born two years after the dreadful pestilence; when the disputes concerning images ran high, and Waliph, a Saracen leader, cut out the tongue of Peter, bishop of Damascus, for preaching against Mahometanism. Constantine had more success against the images than against the infidels however; the Bulgarians beat him shamefully by land, and his fleet against the Saracens was lost in a tempest; he associated his son Leo, commanded the monks at Ephesus to marry or lose their eyes, and died universally detested and despised. His son reigned only a few years after: *he* too wedded a princess named Irene, eminent for loveliness and wisdom, a native of Athens, and known to history by name of Irene the Cruel: by her he had a son called Constantine, whose succession was accelerated by his father's avarice; for Leo the fourth seeing a rich jewel given as a votive offering in the church, seized it

* Perhaps it was not actually *Seleucia* neither; Seleucus Nicator built his city a little lower; but I suppose that does not signify. Bagdat was called Medinet, or *Salam*, the city of peace, by the Caliphs afterwards. *Salam*, the oriental salutation, means *peace* be to you. Irenopolis is another of its names, for the same reason. Irene means peace too. *Pato y Ganfoy Anferon, tres cosas fuenen mas una son*, says the Spanish proverb.

himself, and putting it on his head within the cap of state, fell down apoplectick: the priests considered this death as a judgment from God, and his physicians attributed it to the sudden cold. By that accident the power dropt into Irene's hands, who, during her son's long minority, rendered herself justly famous for having fitted out a powerful fleet to check the Saracens' progress by sea. She likewise recovered the old Peloponnesus (now to be called Morea) from the Slavonians, who then were wasting Theffaly and Thrace: in that province she repaired the city Beröe or Beræa, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles as one of the towns converted by St. Paul, A. D. 53, and called it after herself, Irenopolis: 'tis *Eskizadra* at the time I am writing, and in possession of the Grand Signor. Her imprisonment of Helpidius, governor of Sicily, in a deep dungeon, where he, his wife and children, perished altogether, was but a slight specimen of this Princess's cruelty. She caused her husband's half brothers, sons of Copronymus by Eudocia, to be all killed or banished, or incapacitated, by which that race was rendered extinct which had so long ruled the east. Attempts were made at setting up the progeny of some remoter sovereign, long deceased; Irene blinded them and slit their noses. That she might, in Macbeth's phrase, "sup full with horrors," she next thrust out the eyes of Constantine her only son, and that in a manner so needlessly painful, that he survived the loss of them a few weeks only, and died, observing 'twas on that day five years he had himself, with her consent, so served his two aspiring uncles. 'Tis told us how the sun darken'd fourteen days together at that period; and if he did indeed withdraw his head not to behold such crimes, who can wonder? When the command to massacre a thousand men in one night, was by the same female fiend added to the mutilation and consequent death of her only child.

— Fugit aurea Cælo

Luna; tegunt nigrae latitantia fœdera nubes,

says Ovid, on the idea of guilt pursuing its nocturnal gratifications; and though history may term that mere poetick exclamation, yet surely
to

to relate of Christian potentates, actions which would pollute even a pagan page, must tend to fill the mind with strong conviction, that no hopes even of heaven itself, can allure fallen humanity to virtue, no terrors of eternal punishment itself fright us from vice, without that special grace preventing us, which good dispositions only can receive, and humble souls alone will pray for. Successful sovereigns are always favourites with their people. The fair Irene was eminently so; and had she forborne interfering with her son's love-affairs, she might have reigned long sole Empress of the East notwithstanding her known character for cruelty. But Constantine, in the true spirit of youthful independence, refused to accept his mother's choice, and wed at her command a base-born, though beautiful Armenian. He seized the reins of government himself, provoked by that encroachment on his free-will, and hearing that her forces had been defeated in Italy, catch'd the kind moment when minds were discontented; then gaining easy access to the Queen, dragged her away, deposed, confined, and would have banished her, but that the nobles rose up in a mass, and threatened the young Emperor with instant defection, if Irene the lovely and beloved was not immediately *associated*. Their prince complied; the lady once released, let loose her strong revenge; and Constantine's agonizing death follow'd swift on her restoration. But whilst morality appeared in this state of more than dismal decay, religious feuds distracted all mankind, and numberless lives were lost in the contest, whether the holy Spirit of God should be said to proceed *from* or *by* the operation of the second person in the trinity. Severities, authorized by a council at Friuli, alienated many, and caused the death of more: people were killed, they scarcely knew for why; till the Greek and Roman churches at length separated with a rancour unworthy Christians, upon a difference of opinion scarce discernible, and most difficult to be defined even by deepest reasoners; yet daily then discussed by ignorance, and pronounced upon by rash and precipitate piety, unknowing where 'twould lead to. If however, the Greeks could not

exactly comprehend their brethren's, nor nicely explain their own ideas of hypostatic union, all could now see and feel the vast encroachments of the papal power. The head of *your* church said the Patriarch of Constantinople shall never be supreme over *ours*; he is not now a bishop, but an emperor. The Turk's turban is as welcome to us as is the pope's tiara. This speech was gross, and insolent, and criminal, and has been severely punished by Providence; but the provocation was too great to bear. Pope Adrian however, displayed even in these days much of useful and undeniable merit; his nominal distinction was yet dear to Rome—or what was left of it: and to convince them he deserved his name, when Tyber made a furious inundation, this Pontiff spent his own wealth to repair the walls, as far as 100lbs. weight of gold would go; whilst in the Lateran, he daily fed one hundred poor folks from his own privy purse. He protected the arts too, music especially; and promoted literature, such as it was: his letters* are still extant I'm informed, and prove his elegance scarce inferior to his virtue. Organs were now heard in several churches both of France and Italy; a bishoprick was fixed at Osnaburgh; the university of Pavia was founded, and Magdeburgh, spoiled by the Vandals, was repaired by Charles, soon to be called Charlemagne. This city stands upon the Elbe, and was called Parthenopolis in heathen days, from Venus, who had there a shrine of peculiar notoriety. She left none of her beauty in the place, I think, when her fine statue was taken away. 'Tis observable that Flanders began to break and divide now into Teutonic, Gallic, and Imperial; but England was a prey to Danish ravagers, who wasted the little Island of Shepey, returning quickly to their ships indeed, but heavy laden with spoil. They came again of course, making their landing good in Cornwall, where traces yet remain of their oppressive cruelty. I know not why invasion was so

In Adrian's letters to Charlemagne it is observable that he signs his own name last; this was no trifling etiquette: Zenobia put her name first in her correspondence with Aurelian—He said she should repent it—and *so she did.*

easy;

easy; England had been envied long before Egbert's time for naval superiority, yet these idolatrous and savage Danes made perpetual and successful incursions on our island, as if the sea had then been no security. Though King Offa, who died, as say some of the little books, at dear Offley, in Hertfordshire, where we used to try at tracing memorials of him in my early youth, had entered into a commercial treaty with France, whence Pepin sent him two silken vests, I think, and a Hungarian sword; all insufficient to keep out the Danes, who teased a prince more powerful than he was, and retarded by incessant hostilities, the consolidation of our realm under Egbert himself; but *Don Froila* of Spain, here claims attention, as he not only took that appropriate appellation himself, but bestowed it on all his nobles, partly to distinguish them from Moors and Jews, who occupied large part of his dominions. The Spaniards still calling our blessed Saviour *Don Christo*, seems to us, at first sight, ridiculous; they mean however neither more nor less than we do by *Lord Jesus*. In old editions of Moliere we see it printed *Dom Juan*, shewing that the word is a mere abbreviation of *Dominus*. This Froila had the epithet chaste bestowed on him for living (although married) in a state of celibacy, after the birth of his only child Alphonso, during whose reign the Moors, who deserved no such epithet, made war against his subjects for the demanded tribute of Celtiberian virgins, stipulated by some old treaty to be given up to them every year. Alphonso took up arms against these barbarians, destroyed 7000 of them, raised the siege of Lisbon, and made a league with Charles. To this young hero, son of Pepin the Short, and Berthalde the Fair, who won victory after victory from Saracens, Saxons, Lombards—all who opposed him, the fame of Charles Martel seemed a præcursor, not a rival; like the aurora of Guido, when she scatters flowers before the glowing car of day, swift following where she leads and points his path. Barcelona and Huesca owned his power, the Huns and Abares trembled at his arm; Sweden and Norway blessed his missionaries, Pope Adrian begged to be godfather to his son, whose mother lived not to see

half

half his glories; and Charlemagne, justly so called, took solemnly the names of Cæsar Augustus. These heroick exploits, with his repairing the Roman eagle, first splitting it in two, that the heads might look both ways, in compliment to the existing powers at Constantinople, with his severities to some unhappy Lombards, of which 'tis said, he decollated 4000* in one day, might easily recommend his person to Irene, who offered him marriage, on which he, though the lady was much older than himself, took time to deliberate; when her steward, or chamberlain, by a sudden and successful conspiracy, seized on that cruel princess, and forced her into an island of the archipelago, Mitylene, I believe, the Lesbos of antiquity; where she expired of grief, and with her death, however well-deserved, died much of glory to the eastern empire. Some say that Charlemagne was the first Charles who ever wrote his name with a C. 'twas Karrulus before: but Mezeray thinks his name must have been engraved, for that he could not write or read *at all*, and said on some occasion—"There, I have signed the treaty with the pommel of my sword, and promise to maintain it with the point." This might, however, be mere *façon de parler*; I can scarce think that man so ignorant, who caused to be written the famous MS. of Terence's Comedies, still to be seen, or lately, in the Vatican. Mailros, a Scotsman, who had in his youth been pupil to venerable Bede, became in his age a sort of preceptor, assistant at least to Charlemagne: and when he founded the university of Pavia, this distinguished North Briton acted as his agent.

The year 800 then saw England united under one monarch; the cities of Dresden and Nuremberg, built by the King of France, and that Prince solemnly crowned by Pope Leo III. at Rome, as *Emperor of the West*, upon Christmas-day. The old Spanish historians men-

* Say it who will, it must necessarily be a lie: the swift speeding guillotine alone could make dispatch like this. There are but 1440 minutes in a day, and 'tis easier to utter a falsehood every sixty seconds, than it is to take away the life of a man.

tioning these events, close them with an intended climax, that on the same great day of the same memorable year, St. Jago was acknowledged tutelar saint and patron of all Spain. Italians recollect how the Doge of Venice threw the Bishop of Grada from a high tower, because he refused consecration to that prince's favourite; and Frenchmen tell of the institution of their twelve peers.

C H A P. XIII.

FROM THE CROWNING OF CHARLEMAGNE 800, TO THE
DEATH OF ALFRED, A. D. 900.

LIFE takes a new appearance under the reign of Charlemagne. Knights, jousts, tournaments, minstrels, ladies; characters which have yet scarcely crossed over our little *camera obscura*, now act their parts, and croud forward to the view of *Retrospection*. Yet this new colour, if we call it such, that gives a future tint to manners and to life, is but the shading off to gentler orange of that blood red, which marked so long the now merely *nominal* Roman empire. When the inhabitants of Germany's black forests first left their native woods for the rich vales of Italy, they carried to the scene of action, with their resistless genius for conquest, a settled intent to bestow modes of living, not accept them. Their purpose did succeed surprizingly, old customs were broken up and died away, and a new system was establishing itself apace in all the nations of Europe. The earth was parcelled out to various individuals, who maintained their portions independent of superior power, and Charlemagne swayed a sceptre supported by barons—he shook not his truncheon over trembling slaves—the form of things was changed—

— The cease of Majesty
Dies not alone, but like a gulf doth draw
What's near it, with it. 'Tis a massy wheel
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortic'd and adjoin'd.

SHAKESPEAR.

The

The feudatorial system of high-spirited nobles, who each commanded a large troop of vassals, and bound themselves to bring them forth at a great leader's call, for defence of their own territories, or for the acquisition of new ones, had a ferocious appearance upon the whole ; but the general inclination for war was softened by the respect paid to beauty, which they considered as their just and bright reward. Each generous bosom beat at the call of valour, but could not by his own authority seize on the sighs for privilege, or bear arms without permission. Birth, age, and qualifications were to be examined, and while difficulty irritated desire, the lady languished for a gallant lover, distinguished by his martial talents, and the youth panted for the happy moment when once adorned by the bright lance and shield, he should throw at her feet a hero, acknowledged such by his comrades, a knight respected even by his sovereign. Christianity was likewise young in the world, openly and with violence attacked by Saracens, tacitly sneered at by unbelieving Jews, detested as a successful enemy by Pagans. The votaries of religion thought it was man's first duty to protect her ; Turpin, Archbishop of Rheims, fought valiantly in the field, by side of Charlemagne, and 'tis on that principle that we even yet see the sword drawn in Poland at the moment of pronouncing the creed.

Theology thus mingling itself with personal courage, and enthusiastick piety enflamed by romantick love, not only sent innumerable warriors to contend in the field of battle, for palms of valour and prizes of beauty ; but disposed mankind to think beside that conquest denoted the *approbation*, as well as the *care* of heaven. Private quarrels were adjusted, not by cold equity, but martial prowess ; a champion was granted to females, who could not defend themselves from injury, and the next kinsman commonly pressed forward to take on him the commendable office. Single combats whetted the general keenness for renown, and all concluded, that he who fell had merited his fate. When sword and shield were thus essential to existence, when they

were considered as sole arbitrators of honour, sole instruments of happiness ; what wonder if we find them cherished to absurdity. Marks of distinction, devices, and imprefes, were affixed upon the second, by which to know each other in the battle ; and baptism was, I fear, very solemnly bestowed upon the first. Thus Roland called his favourite sword Durandal, we know—Joyeuse was the name of that worn by Charlemagne. Hamburgh was built by this extraordinary character, and Halberstadt famed for its pied Piper in 1376. Charlemagne's twelve peers are, by romance, given to our Arthur ; they are indeed so necessary to the old writers of these times, that I question whether Sir Theseus and Sir Alefaundre had not twelve peers each. Theseus indeed, those authors made a faint of ; but faints and knights were all that possessed mens minds—

With store of *ladies*, whose bright eyes
 Rain influence and judge the prize,
 In wit or arms, whilst all contend
 To win her grace whom all commend.

The peers were twelve, because the apostles had been twelve, appointed by our Saviour to sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Christening swords* was scarcely left off till towards the time of our Queen Elizabeth ; our tutelary faint made *his* full famous in all ballad story,—

When George, he shaved the dragon's beard,
 And *Askelon* was his razor.

But it was not peculiar to Christianity. Mahomet had nine swords, the name of one was *death*, of another *piercing ruin* ; and Odegir, the

* Odin's horse, and Odin's sword, had names ; Sleipner (*sleep n'cer*) and Tirfing ; I don't know what *tirfing* meant. The daughter of Hialmar comes in the night for Tirfing ; it was made by the dwarfs, and had peculiar properties, disposing her to disturb the dead that she might obtain it.

Dane, a Pagan I believe, called his keen weapon *spatha*: whence spada, and espada, and *spath* buckler, corrupted in our old plays to *swash* buckler. Charlemagne meanwhile, though a mere soldier, scorned not those arts which he forbore to cultivate; but brought to France masters of arithmetick, and some say grammar. He was likewise, although a warlike prince, eminently gentle tempered * and indulgent to his children. A pretty story of princess Imma and her lover is related in the Spectator from Marquahand Freher. The gallant was Eginhart, who says of his sovereign when he writes his life, that he could speak Latin as easily as his own native Frankish, but that in Greek he had a bad pronounciation. When at the death of this great man the empire was again divided among his children, he charged them to live well with one another; and having spilt deluges of blood in order to unite the west under one head, he willingly by testament parted it among his sons, giving to Pepin Italy alone, to Louis le Debonnaire, France, with the exception of Normandy, which went with Austria, Saxony, and Bavaria, to Charles. That there might be no murderous disputes among them after his decease, he left a strict command behind, that if they differed about any thing, the youth who should be able and willing longest to support the posture in which our Saviour suffered crucifixion, was to obtain without further enquiry the purpose they contended for. This mode of decision afterwards grew common, and was called *jugement de la croix*. The French language now began to supplant the Latin, on whose wreck 'twas raised; verses were written and songs were sung in praise of love and valour; while bards, troubadours, tale-tellers and minstrels, softening the ferocious temper of the times, soon taught each warrior-spirit how to bend before a distant and difficultly-acquired fair one; musick lent her aid beside to animate and to inspire devotion. The French

* Charlemagne was himself of an amorous disposition, had many mistresses, and two or three wives. *L'Amour de Dieu et des dames* went together in those days.

fingers however, even then, had the characteristick roughness peculiar to their nation, and made the *tossè di capra*, as Italians still call a coarse bad shake. *Trilletaccio!* say they: at Paris Gluck in my own time said to his scholars, *ne chevrotez pas*.^{*} Our English have a joke on Wales and Welshmen that expresses this fault with much accuracy. *Waaaales*, replies the goat, when his Anglo Saxon neighbours travelling over Snowdon, ask him "How d'ye call this country?" and at the same time shake him by the beard. While thus the west began, at least in some respects, to emerge out of that sad Cimmerian darkness in which she had long dropt inert and lifeless, Irene's death hung heavy on her successor, who, born her vassal, was never by the Queen's subjects willingly obeyed. Bardanes was proclaimed emperor, but soon, after a fruitless contest for the purple, sunk *his* pretensions in a monastery. The rebel chamberlain however fared no better, and Michael, Leo, and Theophilus, were only other names for wickedness and impious folly. This last being born of mean parents, fired a rich ship loaded with merchandize, that no one might suspect his natural inclination for commerce, and made his subjects cut the hair from their heads, because his own was thin. Notwithstanding these mad caprices, he made war not unsuccessfully against the Saracens, although in these days they built Candy, and gave new name to ancient Crete, headquarters of pagan mythology. The labyrinth however yet remained upon their coins and arms: Rubæus says 'twas their device in his time, and he lived 1690. The popes meanwhile increased their influence daily; nor was it *influence* now, but firm authority. Charlemagne's sons could not agree, and Gregory IV. like Chaos umpire fate, and by decision more imbroil'd the fray.

Louis le Debonnaire, of gentle manners but resolute temper, who never had been seen to laugh at any story his tale-teller could recite, had nothing of his native country's levity: his wife Judith of Bavaria, though a German, had too much. Their son was Charles the Bald; but in consequence of this meekness, not agreeable to the spirit of such times,

* Don't sing like a goat.

times, Louis issued a decree that no ecclesiastick should wear spurs. Gregory was displeased, and to evince his displeasure publickly *wore spurs himself*. This Pope certainly exercised papal or parental power with little prudence and with less controul. But to every other force, force might be opposed; the church was unresisted, because it was considered as infallible. Sergius II. availed himself of mankind's disposition to revere the visible head of it, residing at Rome: he built castle St. Angelo, altering it from the moles Adriani to a useful fortress: nor was the step unnecessary, when Moorish plunderers spoiled the suburbs of the once-renown'd metropolis, and robbed the churches dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul. Sergius's name was Porci: his family still subsists at Rome now, and a subject of Great Britain married into it about twenty years ago. In the ninth century however he did well to change it, and accept a sort of ecclesiastical appellation, a practice future popes adopted willingly. His successor Leopold IV. joined the Neapolitans, and beat the Saracens by sea. He built Leopolis, now Civita Vecchia, and even forces himself to be a favourite *with Voltaire and Gibbon*. During that time a monster of impiety, Michael by name, ruled with his mother Theodora at Constantinople. This wretch profaned the Eucharist, ridiculed the sacred office of carrying it to sick and dying persons; killed his innocent old tutor, and thrust his mother into a monastery, all before he was eighteen years old. Venice joined the general league against the Arabian locusts, and Alphonso of Spain married Chimene a French princess; he called her Ximena of course. And having heard that a human body was dug up near Compostella, the king and queen assured themselves it was St. James; he was therefore St. Jago di Compostella: and story tells that a church of *stone*, not *earth*, was immediately dedicated to his peculiar service. This was the season for unchecked imagination. Cromerius and other Polish writers tell of their leader Piaustus Rusticus, who was promoted to sovereignty, and lived an hundred and twenty years, in consequence of his having, when a Pagan, entertained two Christian pilgrims

pilgrims with share of a fat hog killed in honour of his son's birth. The saints, in return for such good cheer, hindered the hog from lessening. This was a useful miracle, in Poland; and Rusticus was converted, and in due time chosen chief. That such tales should be credited is strange; 'tis stranger far that invention should be so confined, and when men are not restrained by even a *desire* of telling truth, that no new fables ever can be found. Another duke of Poland, Popielus by name, used to wish himself and his children devoured by mice, when he meant to enforce belief by strong asseveration. And the good bishop of Varna, who wrote in the fifteenth century, tells gravely how the wife of this king's son, a German princess, advised her husband when he came to the throne to feign illness, and send for all his uncles to a council: she there took care to poison them in drink, nor would permit their being even buried, having accused them of intent to murder the reigning prince. Out of their bodies however, adds the bishop, grew *mice* innumerable, which followed the young Popielus wherever he went; and notwithstanding all that could be done, at length devoured him and his wicked consort.

Denmark went on no better: Olaus there encouraged civil wars to spite his mother, whom he suspected of having hired an assassin to murder his good father in the garden as he slept, and of rewarding him afterwards with her hand. 'Tis possible this tale, better known then than now, gave Shakespear his idea of Hamlet. These stories, with our English law that whosoever killed a cat should lose his right hand, while to purchase so valuable an animal as much wheat was required as would cover the cat when held by the tip of her tail, prove the multitudes of mice in the ninth century to have been a serious and intolerable plague. Destruction of predatory beasts great and small was once more, as in the fabulous ages, become a duty: and so was the world thinned of human inhabitants since the days of Constantine Copronymus, that instead of punishing prelates for keeping a tame hawk, Charlemagne, towards the end of his reign, granted a right of hunting

hunting to the abbots and monks of Sithiu, partly for the sake of clearing the country, and partly that the skins of wild animals might serve, he said, as covers to their books. They had been rolled before; whence the word *volume* still; and literature now excited care from royalty. The race of Abbas too, being caliphs of the Saracens, encouraged literature in Arabia; and while commerce was carrying on at Bagdat chiefly by Jews, attempts were made by these orientals at renewing some taste of poetick imagery. Under this warm sky grew up the new machinery, phantom forms of giants, dwarfs, genii, and enchanters, which followed and succeeded to the old heathen gods in every work of fancy. Spain got them first of European nations, because of its connection with the Moors. France chanted the praises of heroick Roland, and told the truly romantick tale of Charles the Bald. His daughter Judith, in her fifteenth year, was destined to have married an English prince; but he dying, the lady on her way back to Paris being too slightly guarded, wished to walk among the shady trees somewhere in Picardy, and was indulged. A young forester struck with her beauty, unknowing who she was, seized and carried her off. This was Baldwin of Flanders, who took her to his castle near St. Omer's. Charles having found it out by stratagem some years after, and finding they had children, subdued his resentment and made her husband *Erle*. But his descendants were not esteemed of the true kingly blood: and we shall see the Empress Maude, mother to our Henry the first, despising one of this man's progeny for want of noble birth. The famous quatrain,

Cloth of gold do not despise
Tho' thou be join'd to cloth of frize;
Cloth of frize be not too bold,
Tho' thou be join'd to cloth of gold:

was made many centuries after, when Charles Brandon, wedded to royalty, took those lines for his *legenda*, and the ballad-makers adapted them to *this* much older story. (See Percy's Reliques). Whilst manly
vices,

vices, manly virtues, thus characterised the dwellers in the north, such was the effeminacy of Pope John VIII. that he was called in derision *Pope Joan* by his contemporaries; and when the encroachments of that holy see grew hateful, and its tyranny oppressive, under the harsh reign of many of his successors, a story was circulated that a woman had certainly sat in the papal chair. When they were got so far, 'twas most easy to add how she was detected by labour-pains, as she was carried in procession to the Vatican. This tale though Spanheim believes, Scaliger thinks incredible, because he says her voice would have betrayed her; and Baronius denies it of course. Our best writers reject such stuff with indignation: yet was it strange, and ten times strange to think, that so late as in the year 1634 there did most surely exist a statue of her in the cathedral church of Sienna, among the popes, standing in her place: for Colomesius challenged Monsieur de Launoi about it at Menage's apartments, where Racan the poet and the Abate Marucelli the *Tuscan resident*, were present, and heard M. de Launoi confess that with his own eyes he had *seen* the statue in Sienna cathedral in 1634, notwithstanding Baronius's solemn letter of thanks to Florimond for taking it down twenty-eight years before; and notwithstanding Pere Alexander, in his Ecclesiastical History, affirms it was *then* no longer in existence. It might indeed have been taken down before *his* death, which was not till 1710. No modern travellers remarking it, I suppose it is gone now. My own empty head forgot to examine; but I remember observing that John VIII. had a particularly effeminate cast of countenance in *St. Paolo fuordelle Mure* at Rome, where their pictures in oil hang round the wall; and Porcacchi's edition of Gamucci's Antiquities mentions *his tomb, Senza alcuno artificio o architettura ed in somma molto diverso delle sepolture degli altri pontifici*—without any device or architectural distinction, and, in a word, extremely unlike the other papal sepulchres. Enough of this nonsense. Be Pope John what else he will, he ordered the Holy Scriptures to be promulgated in the Slavonian tongue A. D. 880. But *Lothaire* (whence derive our Lowther family)

family) duke or king of Lorraine, arrests our *Retrospection* for a moment. *He* being of the constitution of our Henry VIII. persuaded Guntharis bishop of Cologne to divorce him, on frivolous pretences, from his consort, promising in return to marry the bishop's sister; and Pope Nicholas, an exemplary pontiff, consented, though with difficulty; and then Lothaire married his favourite mistress *la belle Valdrade*. Excommunication justly followed such conduct; but the king, hardened in wickedness, derided all such punishments, and professed obedience to the Pope in spiritual matters only. The *Valesiana* says however, that this Pope, in his correspondence with the King of France, put his own name first, a custom never *after laid aside*. The patriarch at Constantinople tried the same trick with Louis VII. *Valesius* tells us, but the experiment did not answer, *Le roi s'en offensa et le patriarche corrigea sa faute*. The king was displeased, and the prelate mended his manners.

Photius the patriarch, to whom John VIII. had meanly submitted, was now deposed by the new Cæsar whom wretched Michael had appointed to govern the east, while he himself was sunk in debauchery; and the Pope, once firmly fixed in his seat, anathematized Photius, making thereby a lasting and incurable breach between the Greek and Latin churches; forced wild Lothaire to take his wife again, and when he went to Rome for reconciliation, gave him in pledge of peace the eucharistick *cup*, not then denied to the laity. The young Doge of Venice now, John Badoera, wedded the niece of the Greek emperor, and sent his brother to the reigning Pope, Martin, I think, a Frenchman, to request that Comachia might be added to the territories of the republick. The ambassador's being treacherously murdered on his way home, whither he returned only to die, did but accelerate the seizure of Comachia, which Badoera took by force. *Anastasius* wrote the lives of the popes about this time, and *Heinsius* prints a letter from *Sarrau*, saying that there was a copy of that work in the Ambrosian library at Milan *then*, mentioning the female sex of *Giovanni ottavo*. Those in the Vatican were all torn, he says, in that place where the

disputed life occurs. Salmasius had a copy, but it was got from the French king's collection of books, and supposed to have been interpolated by Martinus Polonus, who, though a learned Dominican, believed the tale, and told it clearly in his chronicle.

Wonders were easily credited in those days. That it rained blood at Brescia was nothing doubted: the writers of the ninth century faithfully record *that* event, and 'twas as likely that Pope John should be a woman. Among the marvels of the moment Motassem the *octonary* now shone a glittering caliph amidst the admiring beauties of Circassia. He was the eighth of the Abassides, had eight sons and eight daughters by eight wives—not concubines, princesses. He possessed eight thousand slaves body-guard, and eight millions of gold. When he had reigned eight years, eight months, and eight days, he said it is enough, my race is run, and died. His Saracens meantime burned the fine monastery at Monte Cassino, and exercised sad cruelties upon the catholicks. But Basil, emperor of the east, kept them a little in check, till seized with a sudden fury on seeing his son Leo wear a dagger, he felt persuaded that he meant to murder him; and without giving any notice of his intentions, put the innocent heir of his crown in prison, whence he would never have come out alive, but for one of those combinations which all men now agree to call accidental. The young prince lately married, had diverted himself with teaching a favourite parrot to say *Leo loves you*, whenever his fair bride entered the apartments, whither the king hastened in great wrath, and called the terrified lady to examination. On *her* appearance the bird with an impressive voice cried from his perch *Leo loves you*. Such a sentence so pronounced struck forcibly upon the Emperor's feelings. He doubted not the words being miraculously addressed to himself, when the parrot once more gravely repeating *Leo loves you*, Basil embraced his daughter-in-law with a transport of fondness, called out her husband from confinement, restoring him to even more than pristine favour. A hunting match was made to celebrate their reconciliation, when the stag suddenly turning upon Basil gored him to death, and delivered

delivered the eastern world from *his* caprices; while the travelling of Danielis, a Greek matron, from Peloponefus on men's shoulders (as in a modern palanquin) strikes one with resemblance of manners between these days and those, when this lady waited upon prince Leo with presents out of the Morea, fit only for oriental luxury to accept, and compleatly distant from the spirit of ancient times, the times of Solon or Lycurgus, to bestow; but even the *name* of Peloponefus was forgotten.

In Mesopotamia, about this period, Al Bategnius observed, 'tis said, the vernal and autumnal equinoxes, A. D. 882; Dr. Halley calls *him vir admirandi acuminis*. He wrote a neglected treatise *De Scientia Stellarum*, which Plato Tiburtinus translated into barbarous Latin; it was printed at Nuremberg 1537. I have read somewhere that it was this miserable performance which inspired Tycho Brahe with a desire of studying astronomy. The science of the stars was, to say truth, not studied at all in these early ages, except as in the east there had been always a disposition to consult them about men's fortunes, and find out who was to be stabbed, or who poisoned, by the position of the planetary worlds. The tyrant Basil was deep in these conjurations, while runic forcery still kept possession of the unfeeling north, where Gothick bards and scalds had taken fast hold upon people's imagination, who willingly wish'd to drink beer from the skulls of their enemies, and hoped a future feast of *cerevisiam*, the *barley* drink, from *Ceres*, in Odin's hall. His fearful engagement with the wolf Fenris was easily credited by his descendants, who even after conversion to Christianity still appropriated a peculiar hell to cowards, and thought with horror of the hideous Nastrand, where filthy serpents vomit so much venom that it forms a river of *blue* poison prepared for perjured souls and liars, and black assassins, who seek a safe refuge, declining open battle.

Warton says wisely, that this train of ideas shews less affinity to oriental enchantments, castles, dragons, &c. than to the magick of Ca-

nidia in Horace; and 'tis possible that the barren black heifer sacrificed to Proserpine in the old Greek mythology, and that musick by which Orpheus forced her to give back Eurydice from the dismal domain, might be originally of the same dark complexion as Odin's wondrous song, that made all chains to fall from him that heard it, whether on earth or *Hella's* drear abode,

Where the fell Prophetess abides,
And Lok his horrid shadow hides.

Bartholin tells of a song called *Vardloker* which Godreda sung to Earl Thorchill by command of a witch, youngest of nine weird sisters, as full of prophecy, somewhat like the Sybilline oracles. Besides that Mount Ida is named in the Icelandick poetry as residence of gods and heroes. *Ida* and *Edda* might possibly be synonymous, and that name given to the strange collection, because it treated of celestial and infernal deities, as we might say the *olympiad* of such a work, had it been written in Greek. Bartholine cites an ode that says expressly, how when the twilight of the gods shall be ended, and the new world appear, the agæ shall meet in the fields of *Ida*, and tell of the destroyed inhabitants. In the proem, or prelude to Reselius's *Edda* it is related too that Odin appointed twelve peers or judges at Sigtune in Scandinavia, as erst at *Troy*. Thus then the Romans, Britons, Franks, all loved to deduce from *Troy*, and now Mr. Bryant pulls down our original feat. Such is the certainty of deep research. Let the thought reconcile readers to superficial information, and make them less fastidious, less offended at the thousand inaccuracies their eyes will soon discover in this imperfect *Retrospection*. One sure proof of a connection between the old Saxon and Greek mythologies in our little island yet remains in the names of every day throughout the week; *Woden*, *Thor*, and *Frey* holding possession of three, the *Sun*, the *Moon*, and *Saturn* keep three more. But England was the feat of mixture always, and in the century we are reviewing was crouded with strange nations, strange opinions—Danes, Saxons, Romans,

Romans, Britons: and from the vigorous fermentation of southern softness with old runic barbarism, levigated and sublimed by a warm portion of true Christian zeal, the generous soil teemed with that rare and glorious product, a *patriot king*. Alfred the soldier, the scholar, the legislator and the poet, whose character unites the separate merits of all other princes, as does the country he adorned the separate excellencies of every other nation. He formed alliance with the Scottish kings his neighbours, the better to make head against our new invaders. He fought seven battles with those pertinacious enemies, and when defeated found resources that shewed him no less formidable than before. When press'd by numbers and betrayed by treachery, he was compelled to bow before the necessity of the times, he with a band of faithful followers lived in the forests of Somerset and Wiltshire, sung to his pipe the praises of his ancestors, and animating himself by their example, resolved to visit in the dress of a minstrel the Danish camp. There he tried all his arts of pleasing, there he acquainted himself with all their schemes, witnessed their supine security in the thoughts of his own death, and after six months spent among his adversaries returned and called his friends to the attack. Surprise and terror went before Alfred's army, valour and virtue followed it. He remained victor over all his foes, made their conversion to Christianity his sole condition of peace with some, and drove the rest to Flanders. Then, to prevent further depredations, we see him next equip a powerful fleet, and vanquish by sea such of them as tried to return. Prosperity and peace were the reward of glory, and Alfred used them to each patriot purpose; it was his only aim, he said, so to secure his subjects' prosperity, that a fair maid might walk unmolested with a bag of uncounted gold in her hand from one extreme of his dominions to the other. To this end he revived the use of juries, dropt into desuetude; with the division of England into hundreds and tythings; he encouraged business, and such extensive commerce, that merchants of London traded in his reign for East India jewels, whilst his discoverer Oöther explored at his
command

command the coasts of Lapland and Norway, and established a whale-fishery in the icy seas. At home he founded the University of Oxford, built the towns of Shaftesbury and Godmanchester; and whereas on his accession to the throne he had scarce one lay subject that could read English, and scarce ten ecclesiasticks who understood Latin, so much was literature cultivated under his auspices, that before his death one of his *lecturers* translated from the Greek original some treatises of Dionysius the Areopagite, into Latin, and dedicated his work to Charles the Bald, whilst Alfred himself gave an elegant version of Orosius's history of the Pagans and of Boethius's Consolations of Philosophy, beside other useful labours. He patronized the art of musick which he practised, and called professors from the continent to perfect his attempts at composition; while Asser asserts with rapture his abilities as a sportsman, and proves that though he led a studious, it was in no sense a sedentary life; for, says he, our king caught more game than any of his contemporaries; a circumstance the more to be credited, as the brightness of his eyes and active powers of his person are well known. To shew however in what a piteous state stood the mechanick arts at this period, we are constrained to observe, that Alfred had no nearer method of counting time, than by causing six waxen tapers to be made twelve inches long, and of as many ounces weight. On these he marked the inches, and finding one of these to burn two hundred and forty minutes, he had horn lanterns made to keep the wind away; and committed the care of all to his clerk of the chapel, whose place it was to tell him how the hours went. Abdalla king of Persia had indeed presented Charlemagne with the first striking* clock upon record, a sort of clepsydra, such as the ancients used. The machine worked with water; which upon this occasion being, by oriental in-

* Eginhart says he saw this clock himself, adorned with twelve figures of horsemen rushing out at twelve openings like windows, when the twelve hours were completed, and then returning in again, *as if alive*.

genuity, furnished with twelve little brass balls, dropt one of them upon a hollow plate below, and gave due notice when the hour was ended.

We take no note of time but by its loss;
To give it then a tongue was wise in man.

Charlemagne was one of the few who could hear its solemn voice without a consciousness of self-reproach. To Alfred such an instrument would have founded, even in *this* world, the sentence he perhaps of all men is furest to hear in the *other*: "Well done thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." But although Alfred died not till the year 900, he never saw so complicated a machine.

C H A P. XIV.

FROM THE DEATH OF ALFRED, A. D. 900,

TO THE FOUNDATION OF THE TURKISH EMPIRE UNDER
TANGROLIPIX, A. D. 1000.

OUR *Retrospection* will have little pleasure hereabout in contemplating the affairs of the western empire and kingdom of France, where the progeny of heroick Charlemagne, Caroloman, and Charles, poisoned and thrust out one another's eyes, while Louis le Begue succeeded to that throne which Charles the Simple sat on at the time of Alfred's death. That Arnulph, a little time before that event, fixed *his* residence, and that of future emperors in Germany, is best worth noting. 'Twas he besieged fair Algitrude, widow of his competitor Guido, in Spoleto; but the revengeful lady gaining access to his person, administer'd him such a cup as kept him waking in delirious horror, I forget how many dreadful nights and days. Meanwhile the Empress Zoe ruled the east, associating her young son Constantine, scarce seven years of age, who growing older put her in a nunnery, whence she was taken out no more. He was advised to blind her, but refused to commit such brutal folly; showing the world that all decorum had not wholly left it, although the examples now set by Rome were terrifying to virtue, and even to mere decency. Towards the end of the last century, *Formosus*, a young bishop of consummate beauty, had been elected pope, and crowned the aspiring leader Guido in Italy: but Sergius disputing the papacy with him, a dreadful schism ensued; and Boniface VI. enjoyed the dignity twenty-six days only: during which time his own best friends, frightened at his criminal excesses, lent their assistance

assistance to turn him out, and set Stephanus VI. in the chair. He, with unexampled barbarity, dug up the body of Formosus, dressed it in pontificalibus, produced it in synod, stript, cut its fingers off, and tossed it into Tyber, where he himself deserved to have been thrown; but Aldebert, marquis of Tuscany, had him strangled in prison. A quick succession of perverse rulers followed, till the insolent mistress of Aldebert, a haughty though insinuating Florentine, governed the see and city in face of all mankind, giving her daughter, Marozia to Sergius III. by whom she had John XII. Anastasius would have redeemed the honour of the priesthood, but his death made room for John XI. a martial pontiff, who crowned Berengarius for his good services against the Saracens, but quarrelled with his brother Alberic, and made a disgraceful league with the Hungarians. He first consecrated as bishop a baby five years old, the son of Herbert Comte de Vermandois: this offended all the world in those days, and John lost his life as his predecessor had done. Yet though its professors seemed as if conspiring to take away all reverence for the sacerdotal office, no virtue was esteemed truly meritorious, except bounty towards the church, where outward respect paid to reliques of departed saints made easy compensation for present sinners, among whom John XII. stands foremost, *pessimus malorum*, like Nero among the Roman emperors. What wonder! vested with unlimited power* at seventeen or eighteen years of age, his sport was to exceed in wickedness and folly whatever went before him. Among other frolicks he was accused, I think, of drinking the devil's good health; but he cut the accusers' tongues out, slit their noses, and committed so many acts of libertinism and riot, that an injured husband, or his hired ruffian, killed him before he arrived at twenty-three years old. Indulgencies for every crime had now their settled price from such a priesthood, and Rome became a custom-house as it had long been a sink for sin.

* Quere, Was it not from him the character of Don Juan, or the Libertine, was taken?

Henry, meantime, a German prince, nephew, I think, to Arnulph, dreamed of an admonition given him while sleeping, that should he walk to an old wall hard by, he would find something there to touch him nearly. Impatient for morning-light he hastened to the spot, with which he was well acquainted, and examining found on a battered stone these words—*post sex*. His first conclusion being that in the course of a week he must die, Henry set his mind in a new train, making good resolutions as to morals, and studying to perform such acts of piety as might best ensure his salvation. The time however, passed by, and nothing happened; so did six weeks, six months: good habits grew agreeable, and though he now dismissed the dream from pressing on his memory, the love of virtue yet remained, and instead of voluptuous pleasures he recreated himself with the innocent and healthful sports of the field. *Post sex* however, when six years after the admonition were completed, Henry was, while hawking on his own grounds, suddenly presented with the imperial robes, and history knows him by name of *Henry the Fowler*. He first instituted grand and regular tournaments, which, though afterwards a matter of mere show, served at beginning so to discipline and train the warriors, that by this method the Emperor was supposed to gain those advantages which in due time cleared his country of invading *Huns*. Whilst these events passed in our neighbourhood, England was ruled by Edward, eldest of immortal Alfred's sons, and Baldwin, Earl of Flanders, married his daughter, Adelfrid: from her, fifth in immediate descent, was long after born, Maud or Matilda, wife to William the Norman; so that Rufus had English blood of its greatest native running in his veins, and that blood has been transmitted forwards through male or female even to the moment of this summary's being written, through all the families who have since his time sat on the British throne, each having power to boast descent from him, whose benefits to our island could not perhaps in this world have been more visibly, or more singularly rewarded, than by providing it with sovereign princes for

nine

nine centuries out of his own illustrious progeny. It is perhaps no less odd or remarkable, that none of them ever thought to call a child after the name of Alfred, till George the third did about twenty years ago, and that royal infant died. But we return to Athelstan, the natural son and successor of Edward, who left in him such an encourager of commerce, that consenting to knight any merchant who should make three voyages to the Mediterranean, several attempts were made, but troubles from the pertinacious Danes disturbed and frustrated every great undertaking. A treacherous nobleman being accused of intent to blind this prince, and deliver him up to the enemy, he appealed to Rome, and there solemnly attesting his innocence before the altar, dropped down dead, confirming all Europe in suspicion of his guilt, and giving the first example of what grew common afterwards, and was called *compurgation*.

Edmund, Edred, and Edwy, successors to Athelstan, were, if not weak, at best inglorious monarchs: every day fixed more firmly the power of the priests, every year saw fresh encroachments made by the Danes, till Edgar in some measure revived the naval glory of England: his adventures with fair Elfrida, concealed wife of Athelwold, and daughter to vindictive Orgar, an old Earl of Mercia, have given occasion to an elegant modern drama, where the conclusion is made more to the lady's honour than history admits:—no matter. His son by a former marriage, Edward surnamed the Martyr, owed his death to that ambitious lady's cruelty. She, a true step-dame, desirous that her own son should succeed, instructed one of her domesticks to stab the gentle prince while he was drinking; and Etheldred the *unready* sprung from Edgar and Elfrida, having thus basely obtained a crown;—as basely used it: buying off the hungry Danes with 16,000*l.* to infest his realms no more. A vain and idle purchase, to which, though Olave and though Sweyn feigned to accede, the composition gave but a short and restless interval to England's sorrows and increasing cares. The Danes returned in shoals more dreadful and more numerous, and

now demanded 25,000l. which our prince, unable to pay down, commenced a treaty, and I fear countenanced a massacre. This measure, too perfidious to relate, though executed with the utmost rigour, failed of success, and but prepared the island and its prince for new, and from that moment, well deserved calamities. St. Omer's now was built by Baldwin, and Brunswick by Bruno, kinsman to Henry the Fowler; Maldon, in Essex, has nearly the same date, and arts of civilized life did certainly creep on, though slowly. An old missal in the church of Modena shows how music now called in distinction from colours, and the university of Louvain, founded by John of Brabant, offered premiums for those who should excel in mathematicks. Knights of St. Andrew and Knights of the Thistle were instituted early in this century, while Helena, queen of the Scythians, was solemnly baptized at Constantinople, and requested of Otho I. surnamed the Great, who then ruled the western empire, that he would send missionaries to convert her subjects, soon to be known by name of Russians. This sovereign made Old Cologne an Imperial city, and marrying Adelaide, became King of Italy. Harold, of Denmark, surnamed *Blaatan*, or Blue Tooth, opposed him, but in vain: after a furious battle 'twas agreed that Harold should receive the faith; he did so, and Otho saw his boy christened and stood godfather. In a sportive humour too, and trial of skill, the Emperor standing with the King on the sea-shore, launched his javelin from a strong arm into the gulph of Jutland; it stuck upon a place called Otho's Island from that day to this. Otho reigned more than forty years, and died at Magdebourg, where he was succeeded by the son he had associated some years before, solemnly crowning him at Aix la Chapelle. After intolerable vexations in the south, he saw John XIII. settled in the papal chair, and had the satisfaction to hear of bishopricks established in Denmark, where his friend Harold Blaatan, or Blue Tooth (whence envy with her blue tooth churning venom is by our Spenser called the *blatant beast*) founded the society of Jomsberg in Pomerania, and such was the re-

spect

spect paid to their founder's memory, who had banished the word *fear* from his martial university, that sometime about the year 998, having made an unsuccessful irruption upon the territories of Haquin, another semi-barbarous leader, *his* general, Thorchill, took two or three of them prisoners, notwithstanding their vigorous resistance, and putting them to death in cold blood, ten days after the battle, the first and second died smiling, and saying to each other, "Let's be mindful, brother, of the laws of Jomsberg:" but the third, adding curiosity to fortitude, observed to Thorchill, that they often disputed among themselves at home, whether reflection could or could not, even for a moment, survive decapitation; "And now," says he, "you may com-
 "modiously make the experiment upon *my neck*: I will therefore
 "grasp this knife firmly in my hand, and if, after my head is severed
 "from my body, I make a movement directing it towards *you*, that
 "motion of my hand will show that all remembrance is not wholly
 "lost. If I let it fall, oh then assure yourself that Suatho is no more." Thorchill, says Bartholin, who tells the story, hastened to decide; but the knife, as might be expected, dropped from the hero's hand. Munich, in Bavaria, was built in these days, and called *Monaco*, from a monk's head being dug up when the foundations were making. Ipres in Flanders, bears nearly the same date, so named from the river Ipra. Its manufactures, elegant as they are, have been well known for many ages. *Diaper*, of which our table-cloths are even yet made, had the appellation from the town d'Iper: but a coetaneous city of higher note claims our attention, drawing it an instant tow'rd the Saracen empire, which, by the time we are reviewing, had been divided into seven kingdoms, ruled by seven usurpers, as they are called, I know not why, for all were alike usurpers. The only place they did no lasting injury to is England. They brought to us the Arabick and more commodious characters to count by—1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. Letters of the alphabet were in use before, according to the Roman fashion; and that mode went on upon clocks and watches till quite the other day.

Mean

Meanwhile one of these usurpers, *Alcahir*, about the year 970, laid the first stone of what is now so justly called Grand Cairo, calling it after his own name; it bears the appellation still, cutting but off the first syllable, by aphoëresis, and adding an o to the end by paragoge, *Cahiro*. Bohemia exhibited scenes of horror in this period, or immediately before Otho the Great subdued it: when wretched Wenceslaus was invited by his mother and brother to a banquet held in the church, where they treacherously murdered him, in order that Boleslaus, afterwards surnamed the Cruel, might succeed. Some consolation however, is afforded by hearing Dubravius Scala tell how the lady was struck by lightning, and sunk into a fissure made in the earth as she was hunting, supposed to have been a sudden effect from thunderbolts, or concealed volcano. The fratricide succeeded better, had a beautiful daughter named Dumbraca, wedded to Miesko, a Polish ruler, who instituted the custom of crying out, Glory be to thee, oh Lord! on hearing the evangelists read in church. Hatto meantime, prince and bishop of Mentz, hard pressed by famine, shut up six hundred hapless wretches in a barn, and set the place on fire, that so there might be more meat left for those that remained: when their shrieks reached the palace, “ ’Tis only my starving mice,” he cried. This was not worse than Sylla, who butchered as many thousands in cold blood, and said they were his pigs or lambs o’sticking. The pagan dictator was eaten alive by worms. Trithemius tells how our Christian bishop was pursued by mice, which following him even to a castle he had built upon a small island in the Rhine, there swam after and devoured him. A second Otho now made Italy resound with his exploits against the Slavonians, Saracens, &c. but dying of a poisoned arrow, shot by some treacherous enemy, was buried at Rome, leaving a son, Otho III. for his consummate wisdom called *Mirabile Mundi*. He subdued all opponents, he instituted the Palatinate of the Rhine, and from Henry the Lion, third of the new established princes, sprung the Dukes of Bavaria, who count no higher than the year 980. A memorable

memorable æra for royal genealogies; yet they take the lion of Alle-mannus as coat armour, and consider him as the remote founder of their house. About this time Lothaire's disturbances split France in many parts, and at length by death of Lewis V. (called Louis le Faineant) poisoned by his wife Blanche, ended the Carlovingian race in that country. Charles, Duke of Lorraine, and son to Louis out-mer, having rendered himself odious and contemptible to the nobles by doing homage to Otho for his dukedom, the barons set up Hugh Capet, son of Hugues le Blanc, or Hughes le Grand: he was chosen for merit more than birth, although his being great grandson to a butcher or blacksmith was impossible; and Princess Anna Commena describes his progeny as proud of their high descent. Witichind, Duke of Saxony, had a daughter who married somewhat beneath herself, and offended Odo the regent, and Robert her proud brothers: her son by that marriage was father to Hugh *Capet*, so called from being *head* and leader of his faction: though others say 'twas from a hood he wore, whence *cape* to this day; but although Caligula and other princes were sometimes denominated from their dresses, 'tis more likely that the hood was called cape from Hugh, I think, than Hugh from his cape. His family has given kings to France ever since: 987 saw him crowned at Paris; 1792 saw the last spark of his illustrious line expire in a prison, with the glory and honour of their once loyal and gallant nation; and 'tis observable that Louis XVII. united the old Capetian and Carlovingian families in himself, Marie Antoinette being lineally descended from Charlemagne. Hugh Capet had his twelve peers: they are spoken of by Flodoard, of Rheims; but as his chronicle comes down only to 966, one cannot be sure. Fuller says prettily, that every historian keeps a clock of his own, and sets events to it; though Baker is very serious about chronological mistakes. *My own* poor dial, ill set up at first, for want of stronger sunshine, and difficult to adjust for lack of a better quadrant, and skill in mechanism superior to what I possess, may shew some few things perversely, but the reader was promised only a slight *Retrospection*; and of *that* Otho III. claims a proportionate share.

share. He set up Gregory V. a Saxon, in the papal chair, Crescentius rebelling, set up John XVII. against him; but the Emperor cut Crescentius into quarters, and took his handsome widow for a mistress. He gave the Venetians a sort of independency no other European nation enjoyed, that of keeping their own churches under their own jurisdiction, appointing a patriarch, as at Constantinople. That office in the east was not however, of the pope's appointing at any time, and Venice soon learned to chuse the head of her own church. The Morosini and Caloprini meantime, disturbed the happiness of that republick with their factious contests, of which Rome, to say truth, set the example; and Otho, having burned his wife alive for making love to a nobleman of the court, and then accusing him of ill intent towards *her*, found himself no happier in his illicit connection: for Crescentius's widow, ever resenting though secretly her husband's death, and her own degradation, poisoned the Emperor in a pair of perfumed gloves, and Henry, the limping duke of Bavaria, succeeded.

The Sweno, baptized in Denmark by the preceding Otho, not the wise one, did his royal sponsor but little credit; he soon apostatized from Christianity, and fought a famous battle with the Vandals, who took him prisoner, and as ransom, demanded his own weight in gold, Crantz says, and twice his weight in silver. Such was the fondness shown for his return, that all the Danish ladies sold their finery, and in a procession went to pay for and fetch him home.

Saxe Gotha was built some time in this century, while Mahomet, a Moorish prince, reigned in Corduba; but other provinces of Spain exhibited no fewer instances of vile depravity than Saracens or Pagans could have shown.* Ramirez however, took possession of Madrid, 955;

* A strange cheat is recorded by Vascæus, how Ferdinand of Castile bought a hawk and a horse for a *maravidi*, of Sancho, king in Leon; the small coin, a sixteenth of our farthing, I believe, was to be doubled by arithmetical progression (which Ferdinand understood, but the buyer could not be made to comprehend) as often as the feller could tie knots on the jesses. The string held thirty knots; and the king was forced to pawn all his crown jewels for the payment of this silly purchase.

and whereas his predecessors had been kings of Leon, or Castile, or Arragon, he fixed the metropolis where it is still acknowledged. Madrid was one of those early aggregates of dwelling selected in the fabulous ages for its fine air and wholesome soil; *so* wholesome, that 'tis said there never was a plague there; which privilege can, I think, scarcely be supposed to have been granted to its residents for their peculiar cleanliness or virtue. Sancho the Fat now poisoned his mother with an envenomed cup she had prepared for him; and Avicenna the oriental physician, or his recipes (for the man himself must have been dead sure) could not save her. He came originally from Sinai, *Evi Sinai*, easily changed to *Avicenna*, and I have read that it was *he* brought the Arabick characters among us first. They were very long in travelling, for Montfaucon says they were in common use when Egypt was made first a province of the Roman empire; yet England had not wholly adopted them in the twelfth century. Dr. Wallis in his algebra, chap. 4th, tells of a chimney *he saw* at Helmdon in Northamptonshire with the mixt characters *thus*, M^o 133 for 1133. The adventure of Sancho and his mother Elvira is yet remembered in Spain, where I believe it is the custom still for women to drink *first* when the cool cup goes round.

But the Greek emperors have been too long forgotten. We have indeed seen poor Zoe, so called from tenderness of her husband Leo VI. perhaps, for *Zoe* means *my life*, sent off to a convent by Constantine VIII. and with her the old parrot who had saved his father's life. He, wedding a daughter of ambitious Romanus, associated *him* in the government, who soon made his own two eldest sons Cæsars, and secured the patriarchate for his youngest Theophilact, only fifteen years old. *He* lived a gay life, we are told, and kept two thousand horses for his pleasure; and having had the news brought him to church that a favourite mare had foaled, he set down the sacramental cup, threw off his robes, and ran away to the stable, where giving proper orders for the new-delivered animal's mash of wine and pistachio nuts, he re-

turned to the astonished congregation and finished the service for holy Thursday, that being the day of this extraordinary occurrence. Meanwhile his brother Stephen thrust unpitied Romanus into a monastery for life; Constantine banished the insolent Cæsars, and reigned alone, alluring learned men to his capital, till another Romanus, Constantine's own son, thinking his father had lived long enough, gave him poison; but the cup spilling he recovered, and lived two years longer: after which the parricide succeeded to the purple. His widow Theophania married Phocas Nicephorus, hated for grovelling avarice by all, most by his wife, who leagued with John Zimisces and destroyed him. This Emperor complained that soldiers were ill provided at Constantinople, and eunuchs alone regarded; *he* set his face against that intriguing set of people, and was in six years murdered by one of the very famous ones, Basilus by name. Here might *we* fill, or rather dazzle the *retrospective* eye, with the gold and glitter of those Saracen caliphs who were destroyed by Theophania's husbands. The accounts however both of their riches and their population, stagger much more than they inform such readers as will turn over these inaccurate pages, ill able to settle controversies concerning the old word *Ecbatana*, or decide if that could or could not be the capital of the Abassides; more willing to believe that dreadful earthquake which signalized the reign of Bardes, if reign it might be called, for he was emperor only over his own army which besieged Constantinople, but never took it from Basil, whose daughter married to the Doge of Venice, and was so proud, says Damian, that she washed herself in *dew*. It must have been her son, I think, to whom Otho as sponsor gave such rich presents of robes all cloth of gold. But Pietro Ursiolo's gifts to the church were greater: he bestowed on it one altar of pure gold, beside innumerable jewels to San Marco. The treasures of that building were unknown except to few: while I am writing we hear of its being plundered by Bonaparte.

The cold north now teemed with unattractive vices. One of the
Norwegian

Norwegian leaders denied tribute to the Danes: they sent a fleet against him; and in order to obtain from the angekoks a tempest to destroy these invaders, they made him sacrifice his son to devils. Crantz tells another story hereabouts, late in the tenth century, how a bold archer there, boasting his skill in some rude chieftain's presence (Harold or Olaus), the prince set an apple on his little boy's head and bid the fellow shoot: he did so, and cleft the apple with its point. Our savage ruler observing two more arrows in his hand, asked their purpose. "With one of them," replied the bowman, "had my child's life been lost, yourself should have been shot, and with the next should have been killed he who first stirred to defend such a tyrant." These stories came to England, we may see, with little alteration. Fortunatus's cap is Prince Eric's cap, who had the winds he wished for: he was fortunate in *not* being sacrificed when his brother went to't: but Eric was a favourite with the wizards of the storm; they gave him a cap which, by turning, procured for him the winds he had occasion to use. The other tale we adapt to William of Cloudefelye (See Percy's Reliques); but 'tis an older edition only of *William Tell*, anticipated by four centuries, and with a less fatal ending; for the Norwegian king heard himself called a tyrant patiently, and filled the archer's bag with silver too.

And now, as Dr. Young says, What is the history of humankind? A haceldama sure, a field of blood; darkened with clouds denoting its uncertainty, through which, if any shining character beams forth from time to time, it shines but as the lightning does, leaving like that not seldom dreadful effects. If such be history, and such it has appeared on *Retrospection*, she should be painted as the *Wanderer* describes his allegorical figure, where he says,

A robe she wore,
With life's calamities embroider'd o'er;
A mirror in her hand collective shows,
Varied and multiplied, that group of woes.

H h 2

Such

Such is our small epitome, a convex glass; and what, excepting for-rows, have we reviewed in these few pages which present a miniature and summary of ten centuries, one thousand years on earth, with their most striking names, events, occurrences! Some admirable mortals have indeed appeared upon the tiny stage, too close confined for such exalted characters, ten characters perhaps, *not more* in the ten ages; sent however to show what men by strenuous exertion might be; lent us to see how lovely human nature looks when animated by virtue, set but a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and honour.

CHAP. XV.

FROM THE FIRST FOUNDING OF THE TURKISH EMPIRE

UNDER TANGROLIPIX, 1000,

TO THE TIME OF THE FIRST CRUSADE, A. D. 1100.

A NEW description of men begins a new chapter; while the Turks, since then so famed in story, claim here a glance from *Retrospection's* eye. In the year 1000 after our Lord's appearance upon earth, that formidable though dubious tribe of warriors, deduced from Hebrew origin by some, from Trojan stock by others; shewed themselves of infinite consequence to all. They had two centuries back quitted the Riphæan mountains and heights of *Imaus*, which I am told means *Snowdon* in some oriental dialect, and left the cold abodes of Scythia for warmer climates. They too were *wanderers*, which the word *Turk* implies. But whilst the Vandals settled westward of *their* native regions, these wisely fastened upon fair Armenia; where once established, seeing the caliphs or successors of Mahomet dividing their imperial power, and by division falling into decay, seized their opportunity, and being called in as auxiliary troops to assist the Sultan of Persia, Togra Muculet made himself too useful; and having by his archers driven out the Arabs, became a dangerous friend, if friend, to the prince who had entreated his *aid*, but could not now obtain what he more wished—his absence. The great heroick leader Tangrolipix placed his Sedluccian or Selduzzian family in Persia, keeping the strongest castles for their security. The Sultan, weary of this
unrequested

unrequested residence, attempted next to drive him out by force. The Turkish bowmen made a feigned retreat; but lurking in the woods, burst suddenly upon the Saracen camp; destroyed in that one battle the flower of their army, their possibility of escape, and their hopes of conquest upon a future day. The invaders however made themselves less unwelcome in the domain which they thus wrested from its late possessors, by professing themselves descendants of Zadock or Sydyck, supposed Noah, from whom we are all descended, and by professing the faith of Ishmael as modified by Mahomet. Mount Ararat, they said, was one of the heights of Cathay, the northern district, and now scarce a district of China, which boasts *Fohe* or *Noe* likewise for ancestor, and since his sacrifice they seemed in that country to have been fire-worshippers; yet with peculiar veneration to the serpent, of whose adorers Bryant gives so succinct and yet so clear account in his mythology; the contemplation of the sun's path probably served for both. The *zodiack* being in a  serpentine form, one god moved in the other god's track, and confirmed them in their reverence for each. *Diack* means path, as I have been told; twelve divisions of which with twelve signs annexed portioned out the year, and twelve years formed their cycle, *jehach*, *giack*, or *diack*, each year bearing an animal's form and name, thus, *Mouse*, *Bull*, *Lynx*, *Hare*, *Crocodile*, *Serpent*, *Horse*, *Sheep*, *Monkey*, *Dog*, *Bear*, *Hen*;* the favourite in the

* Mr. Samuel Turner, whom Nambar Deo, the most high and mighty lion in the world, styles protector of the humble, from whose boundless knowledge nothing is concealed, publishes a list of names for the years composing this cycle, somewhat different as to the manner of placing them; but the *Snake* keeps its post of pre-eminence. And by the cauldron of fire produced for recovery of Mr. Saunders, and the never-dying flame of their lamps in Rootan or Thibet, I gather, that the religion of which Grand Lama is the perpetual priest, has for its object the renovating power which, having once survived the destruction by water in the person of Zadyck, *Noah*; will again preserve us from the expected destruction by fire under the person of Dalai Lama, whose first minister is even now in the year 1800 styled Sadyck or Sadeek, as Mr. Turner says.

middle for pre-eminence, or nearly so. Al Suphi, the Sophy I suppose, who died just as these Turks came in; was said to have composed a catalogue of fixed stars too, but as he had no instruments that we know of wherewith to observe them, it was probably a scheme for casting nativities, rather than any attempt towards astronomy; though Costard thinks he fitted the old Ptolomæan catalogue to his own time, allowing for the precession of the equinox.

While the world's notice was strongly attracted towards this new tribe of wanderers, a wild enthusiast started up among them, predicting the felicity of *Turcism*, and extent of their domains, which shall not (says the man) be taken from them, until they scoop away the blood-red apple, and wrap their heads round in its scarlet skin. A modern reader coming to this passage exclaims, "Oh, let them then beware the *bonnet rouge*!" But we are engaged in *Retrospect*. Constantine IX. now ruled the eastern empire, and although worthless enough while he was alive and well, such was the state of matters on his sickness, that the successor, Romanus Argirus, found himself compelled either at once to give up his pretensions, or else to lose his eyes, or to repudiate his well-deserving wife, and wed young Zoe, daughter of the emperor. Few men would, I suppose have hesitated, and this prince had in his consort a convenient friend; she saved her own disgrace by voluntary retirement, ending her still life in a nunnery, and shutting out all troublesome intelligence concerning the nuptials of Zoe and Argirus; who, though he in compliance with court etiquette was married to one princess of royal race, banished her sister Theodora, and passed his time uneasily with Zoe, who fell in love with Michael Paphlago; and the first husband liv'd not long in those days when ladies fixed their fancy on another. This Emperor was very successful against the Saracens, but having ill health, dropy, and epileptick fits, the monks got round him, and prompted his repentance of Romanus's murder; to penitence for such a sin was easily added aversion for his associate; and Zoe felt the punishment of seeing herself hated by him for whom
alone

alone she became guilty. Death broke her second chain, but a new Michael, surnamed Calaphates, set up for emperor, shamed the once lovely daughter of Constantine IX. and banished her by a decree for ever. The people strongly attached to the old house, took up her quarrel, and rebelled immediately; seized the usurping prince, put out his eyes, and called their favourite Zoe home again. She was next married to Constantine Monomachus, who ruled the east in her name; but keeping a mistress with more pomp than prudence, the nobles, ever true to their first choice, resented this insult to the dignity of a family they revered, and setting people on to stone the emperor, resolved to vindicate those old authorities which they conceived to be ignobly trampled on, when the consort of a sovereign princess cohabited openly with a lady belonging to the court. The lady however, prevailed on Zoe, now old and blind, infirm, and almost in a state of fatuity, to shew herself in public; protesting to the citizens that all was by her own consent, her own desire. This pacified the tumult, and Constantine reigned quietly twelve years, his favourite enjoying her post in peace; and both contributing to keep alive the empress, upon whose breath their dignity depended. When she died her husband was himself in *articulo mortis*, and the subjects fetched home Theodora from banishment, and although at this time the flagellants were so esteemed that rods were wanting to the severities of convent discipline; such was the dispensing power of the popes, that Zoe's death induced them to exert it, and force her sad sister out from that last refuge of piety and sorrow, to take (when scarce alive) the care of the Greek empire on herself. Her first act of power was exiling her ancient enemy Nicephorus, and showing that revenge was not, by twenty-eight years confinement, extinguished in her bosom. The next step was associating Michael Stratioticus, who had not spirit to keep the seat she gave him; but dying within the year, a new dynasty was at length begun in Isaac Comnenius, first of a family, rendered illustrious afterwards by talents as by virtue: but we must

must not forget Henry the Limping, so called, because in a sedition at Pavia he leaped a wall, and dislocated his thigh, which never could be set. His generals however, made successful wars for him ; but a great pestilence so wasted Germany, that the old writers say serpents grew out of the dead bodies ; worms I suppose, and frightened those who were yet alive from burying them. This might have cured their quarrelsome disposition, and given them all enough to do at home ; but Conrad, successor to Henry, had no quiet reign : he crowned his son king of the Romans however, and that custom has gone forward ever since. Henry the Black was called to the Empire upon his decease at Maestricht : this Henry's consort is the first I read of who purged herself of all accusing stains by fire ordeal. Pontanus tells the tale, and adds how no repentance on her husband's part could pacify her injured honour ; but resentful of an accusation she deserved not ; that queen hid her vexations in irrevocable confinement, while her husband consoled himself by marrying fair Agnes, daughter to the Prince of Aquitaine, who reigned, or at least governed as regent to her son Henry IV, till being arrived at years of emancipation, fifteen, he thrust *her* into a convent. The rebellion of King Aba in Croatia however, had made a little change here in the western empire, where Henry the Black gave part of the re-conquered provinces to Albert, duke and prince of Bavaria, who from its situation towards the other imperial provinces, named his new acquisition *Austria*. That name remains to it still. Meanwhile the papal chair, which at the very beginning of this century had been adorned by Silvester II. a bishop qualified for his most sacred office by all that study could teach, or capacity retain, now groaned under ambition, ignorance, and folly, when after the death of John, and the deposing of Benedict, three pretenders lived at once in Rome, and Clement, who was elected in their despite was poisoned ; but Benedict returning to the charge, next dispatched Damasus II. and Leo who reigned longest, was after five years imprisoned at Bene-

vento. Succeeding princes, all of noble blood, cousins to the Emperor, or brothers to the Dukes of Lorraine, disputed for the see with fury ill becoming ecclesiasticks. Honorius attacked Rome sword in hand, fighting for the popedom, and was repulsed, although he held the Lateran two years: but we shall soon see the tiara on a head able to keep it fast; at present Spain requires a glimpse of *Retrospection*.

'Twas early in the eleventh century that King Ramirez settled at Madrid, lamented the disturbed court of his cousin Sancho, then King of Navarre, who gave up his innocent and well-meaning queen to the intrigues of *his* and *her* son Garcia, who with unnatural violence accused his mother of adultery with the master of the horse, because that officer had on some occasion denied the bold and young prince access to the stable, and refused him a favourite palfrey of his father's, on which he wished to pursue some adventure. His revenge however, drawing on the Queen's dishonour, with Carlos's decapitation, she demands the combat, and young Ramirez, a *natural* son of the King, offered to fight his half-brother, in defence of an injured lady. The lists were drawn, but guilt, and consciousness of a bad cause, disarmed and overpower'd Garcia: he fell down suddenly at Sancho's feet, confessing his crime, and relating the provocation. To pacify Elvira was not however, an easy matter; she resolved to quit both court and kingdom; nor could the enamour'd, though jealous king, retain her near his person, till he had taken a solemn oath to disinherit Garcia, and leave all he possessed to Ramirez. Such hard conditions broke the parent's heart; but he submitted, and the young prince was sent to expiate his sins in solitude, while generous Ramirez succeeded to the sceptre, and was called king of Arragon. He reigned thirty-eight years, and left his dominions to Ferdinand the first, king of Castile and Leon. Seville now boasted a university, and literature was secretly working up towards the light. Guido Aretine, a native of Tuscany, and monk of the Benedictine order, being blessed with an ear particularly

particularly attentive to harmony, had the strange nicety to observe, in * a popular hymn to St. John, the *emphatick* syllables,

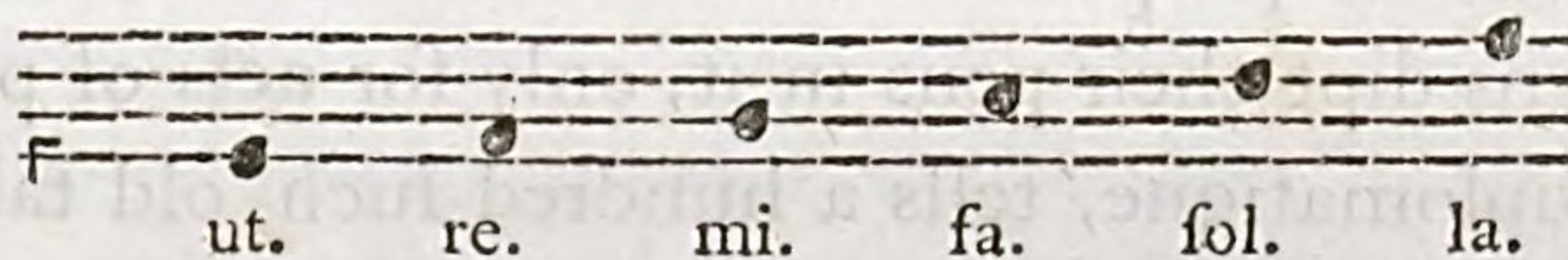
Ut queant laxis *re*sonare fabris,

Mira gestorum, *fa*mula tuorum,

Solve polluti *la*bi reatum

Sancte Johannes !

These *emphatick* syllables which had struck him as they chanted or *bawl'd* out the litanies and Latin hymns, in an odd monotonous tone, much like blind men who beg alms; he had the curiosity to mark with points thus, and put a letter to each, A.B.C.D.E.F.



but because here were only six notes after all, his ear led him to add another; and having marked that with a Greek G, called *Gamma*, the scale obtained the name of *Gamut*, and keeps it still. This is Monsieur de Menage's account, but I believe Hawkins and Burney tell the same tale. The *tuono di chiesà*, is yet a word or expression common in Italy for that same chanting tone: and *deo auxiliante*, as one of the old writers says, we have obtained, through their toil a pleasure to our sense, which hardly can be made a vice of. Writing too, was facilitated by the commoner use of cotton paper than formerly—an improvement which probably travelled into Europe from the east: though it is hard to say when it was used first. Pere Mabillon says, it was an old invention revived, because St. Mark's gospel of the 5th century, kept in the Archivie Venetianæ, is on cotton paper; but all the arts almost were rather revived than invented, except a few, of which we shall have occasion to speak in course of this

* The verses were written by Paul Diaconus a little before the days of Chaulmagne. It was called *contrapunto* or *counterpoint*, very properly, because the syllables were set *counter*, or *against* the points.

summary. Pens were made of *quills* now, as my competitors the little tablets of memory and such books tell; and I cannot contradict them. It seems as if they and the paper came in together, for pens write very ill on parchment, or *pergamino*, as Italians still call it, from Attalus, the king of Pergamus, its original inventor. France civilized apace, particularly in language, which is after all the leading feature—the strong band of social life; but the *imperial ink*, of a *purple* colour, with *green* to mark the dates, was used only in the east, I believe. Constantine Porphyrogenitus, begotten in the *purple*, i. e. after his father was emperor, and born in the porphyry chamber, used this ink for common purposes. I have read somewhere, that *other* oriental sovereigns dipped their pens in it, only for acts of publicity. The Dictionnaire Diplomatique, tells a hundred such old tales, and there was a very fine one in the library at Vienna, 1786, but Ducange says enough to make authority.

A foreigner once asked me, why we called our country in tenderness *Old England* always? It is, added he, in my opinion, somewhat less *old* than any other country. Northern nations were certainly behind hand in the belles-letters, but their romances celebrated virtue and valour and early among these we read the history of Hialmar, in the year 1000, relating a challenge between two champions for the fair daughter of some semi-barbarous king, who fearful lest the world should lose two such warriors, neither of them being likely to relinquish his prize except with life; at length composed the fatal difference between them, by bestowing the lady without even a flock of sheep as a dowry, upon Hialmar, presenting Ulpho his rival, at the same moment, with a horn of inestimable value, on which was engraved the figures of *Odin*, *Thor* and *Frey*; which figures properly consulted (the stars being in favourable positions) would yield a sound from which future events might be on great occasions easily deduced. So here is the lady and the tripod again, as in the days of Homer, and the tripod went to the winner *then*.

It

It appears that there is a circle of ideas in which mankind *must* move. Cræsus published a reward for novelty, but no one claimed it;—and *Retrospection* of human affairs since his time, shows how few pretenders have appeared that could, since Homer's day, find out an incident that has not its original, either in his Iliad or his Odyſſey. But observations must give way to facts for the present: in coarſe ages we judge of manners by their hiſtory—refinement melts down hiſtory to manners, fuſing facts into a ſtream of general ſimilitude, or frittering the aggregate of information into particular and trivial anecdotes, like thoſe of the Babylonian caliphs and Byzantine monarchs, dwelt on by Mr. Gibbon, with even prolix delight. Bringing together a profuſion of learning, however, is always *great*, and in the eyes of unlearned people like myſelf, it is always *pleaſing* to ſee the poſſibility of thoſe old Arabian tales which charmed our early babyhood, lately confirmed by the mature knowledge or teſtimony of ſcholars, and ſuch and ſo glittering, was certainly, in oriental annals, that eleventh century, which owned no merit but of a rude caſt among our cold ſeptentrionists the while; where Frotho, king of Denmark, had ordained, that whoſoever ſolicited a poſt in his army, ought upon all emergencies to attack one enemy, to face two, to retire only one ſtep back from three, and never to make retreat till ſet upon by four. Theſe rules he ſaid, he had always been careful to obſerve *himſelf*, whoſe common expreſſion was, that Heaven muſt neceſſarily be taken by ſtorm, and that the violent did indeed literally ſecure it by force; for, ſee you not, ſaid he, how in judiciary combat, God always goes with the ſtrongeſt. Frotho was ſon to that Sweno, whom the ladies ranſomed by ſale of their ornaments, in return for which kindneſs, he enacted a law that woman might (in defect of male heirs) reign in Denmark, a place of no new name, but called ſo from *Dantz*, contemporary, as I have ſomewhere read, with Romulus; and Dantzig boaſts the ſame far diſtant origin. Sweden had a like truſt in faith and valour—theſe were indeed the Scandinavian virtues; a Swede fights beſt, ſay they, when he ſees

fees his own breath, meaning in frozen latitudes. The ode recited by the three bards of Jomsberg, is a characteristick poem—they were beginning the action: “You shall, says Hacko to them, not relate after this battle, tales you have heard, but fights you have seen.” The contest was with Fairlocks, king of Norway, he was called Harfagre: Regner Lodbrog boasts in his famous ode, ’twas he that killed him: “We fought, says he, with swords, in that day when I made to struggle in the twilight of death, that young chieftain so proud of fair flowing locks; he that loved to converse with the handsome widows. We fought with swords, for a man of arms marches early to the conflict, and makes ample food for the yellow-footed eagle—he who aspires to the love of a princess, will be dauntless in the clash of swords.” Of this complexion too was Harold, the hardy brother to Olaus. He to escape assassination, walked out of his own country as far as Constantinople; two ruffians watched him on the way, but he destroyed them both; finding however how things stood at home, no intentions of return entered his thoughts, and after a prodigious time spent on such a journey, Harold the Hardy entered the eastern capital ragged and wretched, as Ulysses arrived in Ithaca.

Little attracted by the gay appearance of a place so new and strange to him, our northern chieftain’s character broke forth by sudden quarrel with a nobleman in the street, whom having killed, the emperor unknowing, or unheeding of his quality, threw him in a dungeon where was kept an African serpent of enormous size, such as this northern leader never could have seen; they grappled, and the bold Norwegian slew him after short contest. Leo Tornitius then ruled at Constantinople, and hearing what had past, released his valiant prisoner, and informed him of Hardiknute’s decease just learned from Hamburgh; offering him money to provide his passage home, with just regard to rank so elevated, and prowess so prodigious. Harold however, disliking all he had seen of softer climates, and hearing of agreeable changes in his native

native north, walked him disdainfully back to the arctick circle, and gained there the just appellation of Harold the Hardy.

Such were the men who conquered England ; where not unjustly provoked by a feigned peace and real massacre, Sweyn or Sueno, nephew, I think, to Frotho, and like him a new converted Christian, now began to meditate, as Milton says—dreadful revenge, and battle dangerous to less than gods. They had erected bishopricks in Denmark, and given a silver candlestick to the church ; and having no doubts, of course, that they should receive heavenly aid, they drove our treacherous Ethelred down to their finely imagined hell for cowards, and forced him to drink of the hideous nastrande (whence *nasty*, I believe,) and though by dying, he left a most heroick son to contend with them, and well dispute possession of his kingdom, the genius of Canute the Great, who followed his predecessor's steps, acting with more skill and equal pertinacity, soon grew too powerful for Edmund, though surnamed Ironsides, to strive with : a famine too, occasioned by bad seasons, put his troops out of heart, and being at length murdered by his perfidious chamberlains at Oxford, Canute was left in *actual*, though we will not call it peaceable, possession of England, Denmark, and Norway, assisted ever by Earl Godwin, a nobleman, whose vast domain consisting of all Wesssex, and I believe much more, rendered him of immense consequence to whoever should sit upon our British throne. This was in the year 1016, when the king proved that his rough savage manners had given way to Christian humility, by the known speech addressed to his flattering courtiers, who as he sat upon the shore near Hastings, expressed their admiration at his greatness, who thus subdued, they said, both land and sea. Canute replied, "I'll issue a command then, that these waves *touch not my feet*," and so he did, sitting quite still, till a high tide came and washed over them : then rising, cried, " Now see, my right good lords, what little pow'r your
" king hath, and make no more blasphemous speeches in his presence,
" who seeth and ordaineth, and hath created all things." This
prince

prince however, although humble before God, encouraged in himself a lofty consciousness of superiority over other men, for Loftunga, the bard or scald, the laureate of the day, having presented his sovereign with an anagram and acrostick, curiously devised on some great festival, when it was his place to celebrate his master's merits; Canute bid him do better, or *lose his head*, for daring to employ no more words in his praise, and for supposing such exploits could be contained in ten lines. The poet soon amplified his commendations, and so extended them on the second trial, that he received a cow for his reward, besides some marks in silver.

But Scotland now exhibited scenes of wickedness insufferable, brought daily before our *retrospective* eye by Shakespear's wonder-working pen, and Siddons's unequalled powers of representation. Macbeth's murder of exemplary Duncan, and subsequent usurpation of the throne there, marks these perturbed moments; nor can we sufficiently admire our great poet's use of the tale so generally believed, that witches first excited his ambition. Such scenes of superstitious credulity are with great judgment set forth, when he recalls to our amazed imagination runic tales and terrifying occurrences, suggested by Holinshed, Buchanan, or Saxo Grammaticus. Attentive to propriety, he calls no *spirits from the vasty deep*, when Cyprus is the theatre of action, or Juliet's warm and faithful passion brings early-blooming Verona to our view. But we proceed in our summary, which shews some alteration in the affairs of England, where by Canute's death and division of his empire among three sons, no small confusion followed. The attachment which our islanders felt for the father's merits was quickly removed by the young men's conduct, Harold, Harefoot, and Hardiknute. The third youth owed his destruction to Earl Godwin. Ill chance and little skill on all their parts however, left the crown vacant, which was soon set upon the head of a most pious prince, Edward surnamed the Confessor, of Saxon blood, and manners eminently gentle; although his reign commenced with such an act as we should esteem cruelty

cruelty intolerable, forcing Queen Emma, widow of Canute the Great, to prove her chastity by fire ordeal. Leofrid, lord of Coventry the while, in order to shew himself no less severe, levied a tax upon his town, such as it could never have been able to pay. The lady Godiva intreated for her native city, but its tyrant would remit the impost upon ~~one~~ condition only, that the suppliant should ride along the open street without any clothes at all on; and she complied, covering herself with her hair, the people, out of respect and gratitude, keeping close within their houses, that she might not be looked at; although such was the small size of Godiva, and such the immense quantity of her hair, that nothing, if they had looked, could have been seen. This story, told by Matthew of Westminster in his *Florilegus*, is apparently taken *verbatim* from the Golden Legend, where the same tale is related of St. Agnes; and there are many pictures in Italy confirming my charge of plagiarism: but facts are scarce, and the same narration serves to hash up again perpetually. I know not where I have read, but somewhere I *have* read of an accident similar to that which befell the turbulent earl Godwin. Harold taunting him at a feast with some words expressing suspicion of his having caused young Alfric's death, brother of the reigning sovereign, that arrogant nobleman denied it, with oaths and strong asseveration, adding, he wished the bread then in his mouth might choke him, if ever he had cognizance of that tragical event. Anxious to be heard, and speaking hastily with his mouth full, the bread *did* choke him, and convinced all present of his guilt. St. Edward, though married to this earl's daughter, liked the family so little that he resolutely forebore to continue it, although distressed to an extreme upon account of the succession, and sent for his nephew, son to Ironsides, from the continent. This prince unhappily catching a fever and dying ten days after his arrival, left his pretensions to a consumptive boy, unequal to the task of well maintaining them. The Confessor looked with grief on a nameless and fameless stripling as his successor, who has been known to history, I think, by no other appellation than

Atheling; Edgar *Atheling*, as we should say Edgar the *Prince*; Atheling meaning one of royal blood. Whoever killed an atheling was obliged to pay a sum as great as one who killed a *bishop* by mistake; but the primate's life was of equal value to that of the king, when taken wilfully, and bore as high a price. Our sovereign therefore, ill, timid, and irresolute; hung back from naming any heir at all; yet cast his eyes on William duke of Normandy, who being lately married to Matilda, fifth in descent from Alfred the Great, was likeliest to secure the crown and dignity from Godwin's insolent aspiring sons, who seemed to inherit that genius of turbulent and restless ambition which had inspired their father, and allied them all to the throne, pushing their sister to sit on it, however unwelcome to her royal consort. Grown sick and feeble, he but lived to hear that Harold was on his march to London, then died in the arms of his consoling monks; a race become so numerous in our isle, that they outnumbered the military even in Canute's days, who said 'twas upon that assurance he had grounded his hopes of a successful invasion. Thus ended the reign of gentle Edward, who, when one of his pages, thinking his master slept, applied himself to robbing the strong box kept near his bed, cried out, "Thou hadst best take care of Hugo the Lord Chamberlain, for if he catch thee, thou art a dead dog; I myself however will tell no tales," and kept his word. Yet little as this king confided in his own strength of body or powers of mind, he was, as it appears, firmly persuaded that touch of his hand would cure the scrophula, a disease which threatens to outlive monarchy itself, which Harold now came forward and boldly claimed, as a *king chosen of the citizens of London*. Nor were his early acts unworthy their approbation. Harold revised, reformed, and put in execution those laws which slept under St. Edward's half-raised sceptre, whilst a rebellion excited by his brother Tosti, called forth his martial prowess, shewing mankind that England had now no sleepy sovereign to protect her. William the Norman however, not so deterred, resolved to invade and conquer this fair island. He brought with

with him sons to inherit his acquisitions, sons too who boasted high descent from the safe side (he was himself a bastard); he brought with him a heart full of hope, a hand excelling in all valiant deeds; he brought too what was then inestimable, almost irresistible, he brought the good pope's blessing and a consecrated banner touched by some sacred reliques kept at Rome. Pretensions had he none, but through his duchess and dying Edward's dubious approbation. Harold however had still fewer claims; arms could alone decide the contest, and to that decision both brave generals hastened their last appeal. That the English pass'd the night before that battle which was to determine their fate, in feasting; and the Normans in devotion and prayer; first gives an impression in favour of the invaders, with whom came visible improvement in all the arts and elegancies of life. The court of William contained volunteer princes and barons from every nation, cadets of every family, illustrious by birth and filled with martial ardour. Among them ancestors of various houses still subsisting among us, and various others of which the male heirs are extinct. Richard de Cave and Adam de Saltsburg, son to Alexander then reigning duke of Bavaria; these waited on the person of their leader William, who arming early on the decisive morning, reproved the fellow who, presenting him the breast-plate, for want of good light to see by, was fixing it between the shoulders. "Gramercy! good my liege," exclaimed the ready dresser, "this shall be accounted for high fortune to us, seeing "you came hither but a *duke*, ye shall depart a *king*, for I put that "which used to be *before*, *behind*." The event succeeding, William remembered what had happened, and the thing passed into a kind of proverb. It was a bloody contest. The Normans moving on at dawn of day, sung the gay song of Roland, and begun: Harold received the shock with valour, no less well tried and perfect than their own. When such chiefs meet, disputing such a prize, night-fall and death alone can end the struggle; among fifteen thousand faithful followers breathless upon the field on the next day the royal corpse was found, and

gallant William, justly called the Conqueror, gave it with decent sorrow to the countess. Bards, scalds, and minstrels, proclaimed their own and their new king's felicity; for good St. Edward had disgraced that tribe by prohibition of the poet's exercise by priests or princes: although a profession consecrated by Alfred's use should not, methinks, have been despised by any. When learning however, long pent up in the small ark almost miraculously contrived for conservation of those seeds soon to be sown on the regenerated earth, began to look out of her window with impatience upon the wild chaotic waves of ignorance and folly; first on excursive projects she appears to have sent forth her *black crow* Alchemy. After some unsuccessful trials *he* found footing, but not so Urania. Astronomy yet peeped unwillingly from shelter, returning soon again oppressed by clouds, that damped encouragement, and dimm'd enquiry. When she brought back the olive it was dusky, tinged with the brown hue of gloomy speculation: seeking rather to find out earthly events from aspect of the heavenly bodies, than forwarding our sublunary knowledge by observation of their invariable courses. Astrology was suited to the temper of such times; and science, on her first attempt at re-appearance, was in danger of being seduced to serve in a bad cause, by the resemblance this branch of her tree bears to the magician's wand. Arabian literature was of most worth. Perhaps the Arabs introduced some pleasures too, unknown in our rough regions; chess, for example, invented by a *sheik* of their country, and thence called *echecs* in French; but they themselves had it from Greece, I've heard; and Draco, the severe lawgiver of Athens, was said to have taught it to Dionysius, as an amusement to divert his mind from cruelty. Happy if so, had Rome brought that with other luxuries from Sicily; it might have saved some lives from Nero and Domitian. Nicephorus and Irene the Cruel are represented as alluding to this game in their correspondence, by Mr. Gibbon; but though he is usually liberal in quotations of authority, I can find none *to that*.

Soon after the accession of *our* Conqueror however, Johannes Grammaticus,

maticus, having studied polite literature at Paris, where the young men of rank from other nations were in his time sent for education, set up a sort of academy at Oxford, and took pupils from noble houses, in order to instruct them in the *belles-lettres*, explaining to them Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and writing a small treatise upon versification. Lanfranc likewise did his part with spirit; for whereas *one book* then served *many* monasteries in Spain, this prelate, A. D. 1072, enjoined his librarian here in England to deliver *each* of our religieux a book, and allow each man a year to read it in, and those who had neglected it so much, as at the twelvemonth's end to know nothing of its contents, were to do penance with other delinquents, in the church upon Ash-Wednesday. Of what was known concerning Greek in these days I can give little account: Hebrew had kept itself alive by William's edict, calling over Jews to settle here with a view chiefly to promote commerce; it had however some effect on learning. Painting was completely a dead letter; music breathed more freely; the difference between *b* natural and *b* flat extended her powers a little. The Gothick *b* was *natural* to us, no doubt; the Roman *b* was softer, and Italians call it *b molle*. *Faux bourdon* is a mere French term for a humming noise—*vous bourdonnez toujours* is their word yet, for one who hums a dull drony tune to himself as he walks along. But facts demand our *retrospective* glance, which, while it finds the sterile world *effete* almost to the production of either elegance or science, sees its rough rulers recreate their minds, wearied with plans of war and self-aggrandizement, by imitation of like fatal struggles, by tournaments without doors, by chess within. In evil hour did the Conqueror of England's two fierce sons, Robert and William, who had so often quarrelled with each other, sit down to this last game with Louis le Gros, hereditary prince of France. The youth who had unhorsed in fight even his own valiant father, was not of a turn to yield at chess; and Robert rose from table sworn enemy to Lewis VI. surnamed the Fat, nor did the consequences of the dispute end for three centuries after it commenced.

Robert

Robert Courthose however, neither deposed the Conqueror, nor even succeeded to *him*, who, as he himself expressed it, meant in no wise to put off his clothes until he went to bed. Lanfranc, the archbishop, who was so great a benefactor to the sees of Canterbury and Rochester, was much in the king's favour, and recommended him to chuse William, surnamed Rufus, as his heir. He did so; but being grown fat and unwieldy, having first built the Tower of London, settled the Doom-day book, and received homage from the King of Scots, found himself ill and confined: yet when Philip of France, hearing the news, said savagely—"That usurper of Britain, methinks, lies long in *child-bed*:" our Conqueror replied—"Ay, marry! and when I have been church'd once, there shall be much light seen at Paris." He kept his word, and on recovering, wasted the French territories with fire and sword, till the metropolis, as he had predicted, prepared for his approach, which a fall from his too fiery charger alone prevented; and our English people cried a judgment for having destroyed thirty-six churches and villages between Salisbury and the sea, merely that he might have more room to hunt in. Such was the character of this rough chieftain. Baldwin, of Flanders, who built Dunkirk, lived a life contrasting these harsh warriors: he made a vow never to wear a weapon. Godfrey o'Lorreyne had gentler manners than his coarse contemporaries. He built *Delft*, in Holland, so called of the deep ditches he *delved* round her: but having no sons, left his possessions to a beautiful sister, Countess de Blois, and mother to Godfrey of Boulogne, of whom much hereafter.

Gregory VII. meanwhile reigned at Rome, resolving even with Cæsarian boldness, to restore all the temporal dominions she had once possessed, to that proud city; whose devouring vultures, seen by old Romulus, when least expected turn'd at a distance, and *pass'd by once more*, promising a fresh career of power and rule over a submissive world. Of that world, half Europe and some parts of Asia trembled before the nod of Gregory the seventh. Michael Ducas, Emperor of
the

the East, was deposed; the King of Poland was excommunicated; so was every ecclesiastick too, who meanly held a benefice in any realm obtained by lay friendship, or confirmed by lay authority. Boleslaus, son of fair Dumbraca, was degraded, and his land declared no longer a sovereignty: England was threatened with invasion for having long neglected to pay tribute. The Pope seized Spain as his entire property, sharing it out among adventurers, who undertook its rescue from the Saracens, agreeing to hold it themselves in vassalage of the sacred see. Against proceedings which so stunned mankind, none dared protest but Henry IV. who called himself Emperor of the West, and felt enraged by these encroachments; but Gregory, disdaining to hold dignities under *his* jurisdiction, prepared for war, absolved the Hungarian subjects from allegiance, and took care to remind men that Rome alone was mistress of the world. Thus after many princes had been baffled in trying to obtain and keep the papal chair, this haughty Hildebrand, son of a Tuscan carpenter, taught all his successors to scorn imperial confirmation in their office, when, by that office, he could force the nominal ruler of our western empire to cross the Alps amid the snows of winter, and sitting barefooted and bareheaded for three nights and days at the unop'ning door of Castle St. Angelo, *there* solicit that absolution and reconciliation, which Gregory, after long pause and various ceremonies, at length condescended to bestow. Thousands of lives indeed, were lost in these hot contests; for Henry, burning with revenge and shame, set up an anti-pope, who drove his enemy before him to Salerno; yet nothing desirous to lose the temporal powers or possessions annexed by the last bishop to the see of Rome, *he* confirmed all his predecessor's decrees, which were collected now and called *Dictatus Papæ*. Among them perhaps, is recorded the verse woven into that diadem with which Gregory presented Rodolphus, Duke of Suabia——

Petrus dedit Petro
Petrus diadama Rodolpho.

The

The duke put it on, swearing to hold it on his head or cut his hand off. In consequence of such a vow, he did fight no fewer than nine battles to maintain it; then finding himself hard pressed, chopt his right hand away, and with the other flung from him hastily the fatal gift, submitting to his lawful sovereign Henry. Meanwhile the active Gilbert, of Ravenna, set up by that Emperor against the Pope, performed in his turn prodigies of valour, yet never got himself confirmed in the succession, which Victor, their next choice, found so turbulent and dangerous, that he most earnestly requested their permission to retire and end his days in St. Girolamo's monastery. The event shews how wise was his determination, by which indeed he was not suffered to abide. Contending spirits forced him out again, and ill success drove him for last refuge to the Moles Adrianæ, or Castle St. Angelo, where he soon died of poison, and a Frenchman, Urban II. succeeded to the chair, not unmolested by still restless Gilbert, who called himself Clement III. till in the papacy of Paschal II. he died, leaving the popedom so increased in power, that this last prelate made no scruple to subscribe and date all public acts, *the year of his own reign*, not the emperor's; which anecdote serves as a little mark among the many crowding events that in this interesting century perplex the *retrospective* eye, which sees with wonder here reviv'd, a characteristick peculiar to the Roman state, against which all foreign efforts to obstruct her growing greatness, whether under Pagan or Christian dispensation, were found equally inane, inert, inadequate; while civil dissention's self had no effect in restraining the rapid progress of her conquests, either when Marius and Sylla disputed the dictatorship, or when, as in the times we tell of, schism disturbed her church, and ignorance seemed likely to undermine it. Ill conduct in the sovereigns of other states are apt to bring disgrace on their authority;—not so in Rome. The temper of the eleventh century so visibly co-operated with that martial spirit, that resistless vigour seemingly inherent in her princely city, that once more arrayed in pomp and pride, in purple and in scarlet, she said to the subjected world,

world, with confidence, *I sit as a queen, I shall know no sorrow.* We must however look back for a moment, and see *why* Gregory unking'd the fledged Polack. Stanislaus, bishop of Cracovia, and a man of learning, had stept in between that petty tyrant and his vices. Boleslaus had torn from one of his nobles a wife whose affections her husband had till then enjoyed, and the pope's legate insisted very properly that to his penance should be added—retribution. Stung with revenge, the savage prince, in his own chapel, caused to be assassinated a monitor whose conduct deserved praise, not death; nor yet contented with exercising such sacrilegious brutality, ordered the corpse to be carried up a hill without the city and cut in quarters. An eagle there, less inattentive to his suffering virtue, (says Cromerius) hovered around the palpitating members, protected them from further insult, and so amazed those who presided at the horrid ceremony, that they forebore th' entire execution on't, and Boleslaus yielded a fullen consent that the body should be buried. "The famished eagle screams and passes by," is then a beauty borrowed from historick fact. What wonder! Fiction never so impresses the mind, as when reality assists the engraver; and few situations afford a finer subject for the pencil than does old Rome's ever majestick emblem, thus even *literally* defending her sacerdotal dignity. Such kings required such popes to controul their cruelty; but when the power of investiture was lost, the sovereigns of Europe dropt into slaves apace, without much need of arms the quicker to subdue them. All learning too, possessed by churchmen merely, *they* grew the natural refuge of the poor, the terror of the rich in every country; and to that mental superiority, which by its own nature will procure command, and insure ready obedience, they often added superior merit too, and dazzled mankind by their appropriate excellence.

The city of Loretto now was built, at least was founded; Suidas was supposed to have lived in these days, though the reign of Alexis Commenus boasts his writings. The historical and geographical lexi-

con of this author was edited by Kuster with immense care and notes beside, in the year 1700, and dedicated to the King of Prussia. 'Twas about this time too, that Spain cast aside her Gothick characters, Alphonso having commanded there the use of Roman letters. Urban II. now founded the university of Pisa; the order of Carthusians was instituted by St. Bruno, who wrote the story of the Saxon war, while Robert, of Hereford, in our own country, taught mathematicks, and diffused a spirit of knowledge through his diocese. The Norman kings, addicted all to war, or savage sports resembling it, bowed down before the sense of higher intellect, and William was even happy to look on, whilst Lanfranc, a Milanese, was primate of all England. Our old Saxon nobles now were roughly treated, and numbers of them forced to fly the realm, while not a finger was lifted up against ecclesiasticks of whatever origin, for in those days they only could not offend. The pope sent nuncios into every nation, protecting his own dependents against the laws of the place, compensating the celibacy which he strictly required of them, with private indulgencies and public support. Alphonso, of Castile, was a favourite with his clergy; but Cid ruy Dias assisted Ferdinand of Arragon against his father Ramirez, and disturbed all that part of the world with his exploits, the theme of every song, the admiration of a wondering age. His being made governor of Toledo increased his renown. The Moors having had long possession of Valentia, could hold it fast from every force but his, and the Cid's entry is not yet forgotten. I have myself seen it represented in a ballet: Don Quixote makes his name familiar to us all, and Corneille has immortalized the story of Ximena. These were the days of *artificial* passions, and sentiment prevailing over nature. We have seen honour in Elvira of Spain triumph over and trample upon maternal tenderness: we now observe the heroick daughter of the Count de Germaz in love almost to madness with the Cid; yet when she heard her father was fallen by his arm, regardless of all feeling, except filial fondness, she flew to demand his death

death from Ferdinand, pursuing her point with a vindictive fury that convinced all the world she was in earnest. That Prince however, recommended marriage rather than revenge, and assisted her valiant lover to intreat his pardon. She resisted their united supplications and the Cid's merits, and her own heart six years; and history tells us that the Pope's command was added to the King's request before Ximena would consent to the connection, or accept a hand stained, though by chance, with a dear parent's blood.

Such were the times, and conduct, and opinions, when Alnwick Castle was besieged in Westmoreland, and battled for between the King of Scots and King of England; when famine wasted the inhabitants of Denmark; when William Rufus rebuilt merry Carlisle, and proved he understood the English character, easily led as now by a single word, though difficult to be driven. He bid all loyal hearts repair to him, and swore he would himself call that lad a *niding* who should resolve to stay at home that day. Campden says, such was the crowd, that the place could not hold them: no man would be called a *niding* by his sovereign: it means a *nestling*, I believe, one who keeps home for fear. We say a *milk-sop*; but Rufus's word is nearer. This Prince now offered Robert his brother 666 lbs. weight of silver for a mortgage of the duchy of Normandy: a cruel bargain we should now esteem it, but plate was scarce then, and one pound weighed fifty-two ounces.

A slight *Retrospection* of oriental affairs will bring us to the close of this long century and tedious chapter. Isaac Comnenus being struck with lightning, was at the same moment strongly impressed with the necessity of a peculiar thankfulness due to God: he therefore devoted himself wholly to prayer, turned friar, and invested Constantine Ducas with the imperial purple. This Prince was called *Porphyrogenitus*, having been born after his father Isaac was invested with the *purple*. He married Eudocia, by whom he had three sons, Michael, Andronicus, and Constantine. The second was of a gay temper, kept fourteen

hundred hawks, I think, and seven hundred men to wait on them; and was the first who introduced the place of grand falconer. The eldest was the man expelled by Gregory. Their father finding he had not long to live, made his wife swear upon his death-bed that she would never marry; but in two years she begged the patriarch would dispense her oath, promising in return she would wed *his* nephew, and associate him to the prejudice of all her sons. Consent was soon obtained upon such terms, but the false lady called out Romanus from his prison, where he was put for treasonable practices against her husband Constantine, and celebrated her nuptials with him publicly. The new Emperor however, used her ill, which young Andronicus resenting, seized the usurper, and put out his eyes, placed his brother Michael on the throne, of which indeed he could not keep possession, and hid his silly mother's shame and sorrow in a convent. Turkish Axalla now braved the Greek emperors, and wasted all the frontiers of their once wide-stretched domain: Eudocia's *valiant* sons died in battle defending it, and Michael Ducas, the pious one, hearing their ill success, expired in his monastery of a broken heart.

Alexis * Comnenus, next heir to Isaac's possessions, and uncle to the late princes, was now called to rule. He erected schools, hospitals, and asylums for the poor, and educated his daughter, the accomplished Princess Anna, in every branch of knowledge. The eastern world did indeed possess all the learning that there was in those days, for although William of England said on some occasion that an ignorant monarch was no better than a crown'd ass, which sentence Camden records among his wise speeches, few other princes were persuaded of such truths. Theodoric's gothick notion that valour and philosophy were incompatible, went on from father to son with few exceptions, and the popular song of Roland evinces that females alone lamented the literary famine which followed those dark ages. Ambitious Rome

* Alexis means the lion.

promoted that opinion, because mankind's general want of light drove them to her as sole seat of illumination. She had even then (for Boleslaus' fault) forced all his subjects to pray in Latin only, and had prohibited the Scriptures in his realm (a strange method of curing immorality) but obliging the people's private as well as publick devotions to be made in that tongue, *kept its use alive*. Proportionate to ignorance, flourished credulity;—dreams were rather more thought of than realities, and when our Rufus died of an arrow shot by chance as he was hunting, it astonished no one who remembered how he told the pages when he waked that morning of a strange fancy which possessed his sleeping hours; having it seems dreamed that a cold wind suddenly pierced through his side. The loss of these rude leaders was indeed little felt among their followers, nor does it appear that subjects then thought any *show* of affliction necessary to decorum. His body, found by some fellows crossing the forest, was flung on a horse's back, and interred with little care at Winchester next morning. Future attention recorded the accident by a stone set up where grew the tree on which the arrow glanced. Lord Delaware erected the memorial, and Mr. J. P. Andrews drew the scenery for the Gentleman's Magazine, September, 1786, adding, that the family of Purkess, who carried the corpse across the forest *then*, inhabit to this day the neighbouring cottages.

England, though coarse, was not however poor in those days: the Conqueror's income was 400,000*l.* o'year, in those days, I've read, and his son William had not diminished but increased it. The cinque ports were begun, gold coin grew into use, corporations were established, the odious taxes laid on by Danish tyranny remitted, and though the curfew, or *couvre-feu*, revolts Polydore Virgil so, it was not first invented to torment our island: the Normans had submitted long before to put out their fires at their king's command. Domeboc, or Doomfday-book, had been begun, I think, in 1081, finished in 1087. It exists still, as I have been told, fair and legible. King Alfred made
one

one long before, which, if yet in being, must be looked for at Winchester. 'Tis called *Rotulus Winton*, and refers T R E for Tempus Regis *Ethelredi*. William the Conqueror, in his newer work, refers T R E likewise; but that means Edward the Confessor. *Valebat* so much for example T R E *Tempus Regis Edwardi*. It was worth such a sum in King Edward's time. The institution of our Court of Chancery, final division of England into baronies, and completion of Bevefton Castle, in Gloucestershire, with the buildings of Westminster Hall and London Bridge, all done before the accession of Henry the first, alone shall delay me from the Holy Land.

C H A P. XVI.

FROM THE YEAR 1097, FIRST CRUSADE, TO THE MIDDLE
OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY, A. D. 1150.

AND now the troubled waters, which had deluged our world with barbarism, like those that drowned it in the days of Noah, subsided not all at once. A rushing and a mighty wind drove them into a new current, and its supernatural impetuosity was reasonably enough ascribed to the immediate hand of God. Gregory the seventh's powerful and persisting ambition first dug the channel; but the breath of a mean fanatic was employed to blow forward the tide that filled it. Peter the Hermit, born at Amiens in Picardy, made, as did many more, a devotional pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where it began to be supposed in Europe that Christ would, at the close of the thousand years mentioned by Saint John, appear once more on earth and judge the world. He saw there how the Turks, after wresting Syria from the Saracens, treated our brethren with peculiar cruelty upon that spot where their great Saviour's sufferings led many to contemplate the scene of their completion; nor will I much extend myself in arguments to prove, what in this day none will dispute, how men had better serve the Lord at home, obeying his precepts, and imitating his example; than by undertaking a tedious journey for the sake of seeing the place where his cross was first erected. Manners *must* in some measure change with times. There were then no scriptures publicly read and known, nor were the limits of duty ascertained as now, within the well-known precincts of the gospel; but piety delighted to warm

warm her languid virtue by cloſer approaches to the Sun of Righteouſneſs, and ſorrow haſtened to that hallow'd ſpot, where firſt ſhe roſe with healing in her wings. Curioſity, eldeſt child of learning, was not then born, to turn the traveller's attention upon objects which, to the minds of pilgrims in thoſe centuries, had no attractive power; nor did they dream, in the year 1100, of ſimpling upon Mount Sinai, where early man received the law from everlaſting God, in thunderings, and lightnings, and voices. Peter the Hermit then returned to Europe, ſluſh'd with a generous and natural indignation at ſeeing that his Redeemer's ſervants were inſulted, his holy ſepulchre profaned, and all the myſteries of our religion derided, where their ſacred institution firſt began. Haſting to Rome, where Urban II. filled the papal chair, he poured forth his torrent of complaints before it, and the pope called a council at Piacenza: no hall however was found that could contain the flocking multitudes, and their convention was held upon a plain. Such were the tranſports excited by one pilgrim's warm pathetick eloquence, that all preſent devoted themſelves ſolemnly, though ſuddenly, to reſcue Jeruſalem from Turkiſh tyranny and vile oppreſſion: and Urban, (whom Hume and Goldſmith call Martin, by miſtake) deſirous to engage the rich and powerful in ſuch a cauſe, ſummon'd another council at Clermont d'Auvergne. Peter, whoſe vigour felt like that of fabled Antæus, renewed by touch of his own parent earth, *there* ſtill more loudly reiterated his exhortations to a crowd of liſtening princes, prelates, nobles, knights, and pious women, who with one accord, as if inſpired, cried out all at once "God wills it ſo, God wills it." Words from that hour conſecrated as a ſignal of rendezvous and battle, whiſt all united and prepared for war under the bloody croſs, fixed as a badge upon the right ſhoulder, and painted on every ſtandard through the continent. Artizans, prieſts, peaſants, enrolled their names; and although *our* iſlanders ſeemed the leaſt heated by this contagious calen- ture of enthuſiaſm of any European inhabitants, many barons and nobility, high in both power and wealth through England, ſold their poſ- ſeſſions

feffions off, broke up house-keeping, and away for the Holy Land. Those who declined the service were soon branded with ignominy as avaricious, heretical, or pusillanimous. *Nidings* perhaps, till in those days of scanty population, when Domesday-book declares York to have contained but 1418 *families*, Norwich 738 *houses*, only, with others in proportion,—an army of 700,000 combatants from all countries were collected, *fighting men*: those who assumed the cross, and followed as assistant reinforcements, &c. were six millions. Of these, 300,000 troops went first with Peter to conduct them; while Godfrey, of Boulogne, who commanded 400,000 more, began to feel uneasy lest the armament should by its magnitude defeat its own great purpose. “All Europe (says the Princess Anna Comnena) torn up from the foundation, seemed ready to precipitate itself on Asia in one united mass.” Gibbon derides the female eloquence which thus expresses itself *in warmth, yet figure*; but such occurrences described by those who saw and felt them, will seldom be related neatly or tersely, or with that French *tournure* and delicacy of quick finish, that is no less remote from manly character and unaffected simplicity, than is the natural sublimity of the princes. Europe did indeed precipitate itself on Asia, like a vast *avalanche* tumbling from her snowy Alps; like that it suffocated for a time, but not destroyed, the foes on which it fell; like that too, it in due time dissolved away, leaving no trace of its own violence. That violence however, was not unprovoked: Fuller, whom we will not suspect of foolish warmth in a cause which he first ventured to ridicule, feels himself honestly obliged to confess that the Bosphorus was too narrow a ditch, and the Grecian empire too low a hedge for keeping out these astonishing invaders, who had already wasted Italy, conquered Spain, made inroads upon Aquitaine, and possessed many islands in the Mediterranean Sea. The war therefore (adds he) was partly offensive, partly defensive too, like a weapon fix’d in the bosse of a shield. Silvester II. tutor to Otho, had in the year 986, written a sort of pastoral letter, elegantly lamenting the fate of Jerusalem, but was

listen'd to by the inhabitants of Pisa alone, who armed against the Mahometans, but being single had no success. The truth is, Silvester possessed too much literature for the times he lived in : the mass of mankind did not understand him. Peter the Hermit's louder cries, and ruder manners, awakened those who slept at the call of rational and well-informed piety : besides that, at the close of the tenth century, a sudden alarm seized people's fancy, and many thought the world was in its last convulsions. L'Histoire de Languedoc, by Vaisette, preserves a French charter, beginning thus : *Appropinquante mundi termino, &c.* *As the end of the world approaches, &c.* and individuals made themselves so certain that the closing scenes were near, it was a common practice to throw up all, and run to meet their Saviour where he suffered. Such disinterested conduct must clear them at worst from all suspicion of hypocrisy ; but what was begun in honour was continued afterwards by many, certainly through a spirit of mean prudence, as coarse fuel serves to keep alive that flame which touch ætherial lighted. Those who assumed the cross were exempted from prosecutions for debt ; they paid no taxes for a considerable time : they were not bound to plead in civil courts, but were put wholly under care of the church, and thus almost emancipated from the then hard pressure of some superior lord. These strange immunities were cause of temporary union ; for debtor and creditor, plaintiff and defendant, baron and vassal, took the common badge ; and shaking hands in friendship, set off together for Palestine. Our elegant historian Hume tells us beside, that the great nobles then possessed in every country the right of making peace and war, which above all other privileges they valued, and that they were engaged in perpetual hostilities with each other. He might have added, that as marriage was then forbidden as far as to the seventh degree of consanguinity, and all within that pale were *relations*, bound by blood to support *family* quarrels, so that the open champagnes were become theatres of contest, between bands of subjects fighting in their own causes, without the smallest regard to law,

law, justice, or kingly authority. Every man, popularly speaking, being by this system dependant either on his own, or on a kinsman's sword—What wonder if valour was considered as the only excellence? When civil sports were all connected too with mystick devotion, and scenick representation, returned to its first swaddling bands, attempted nothing but the narration of a sacred story, oddly assisted by grimaces of the relator, and sighed for a long procession, not yet in use, but half in contemplation—what marvel, or what harm indeed, if superstitious phrenzy did for a moment seize upon mankind, and set on foot one vast one serious and sublime procession in order to regain the Holy Land; the attendant multitude is at this distance of time difficult to conceive; women not mean of rank followed in the train for devotion's sake; and the word *volunteer*, then first adopted, seemed to include every description of men, from pardon'd criminals to barons of high birth; giving for benefit of all at once, to every idle individual a centre of union, and binding the irregular and shapeless mass into a determined, though ill-fashioned form. Arpin now sold the Vicomté de Bourges to Philip I. king of France, in full persuasion that our world was ending; but he who bought did homage to the Comte Sancerre, in whom 'tis plain piety had not deadened that sense of equality, as a knight and gentleman, in which nobles of those days stood to their nominal sovereign, who was only, as it were in some respects, superior lord at home. Europe was broken into various but tyrannick aristocracies, where the chieftain, whether king, duke, or baron, was judge in civil cases, and the church in all the rest. Reading was yet of difficult attainment, and no written laws could have had much effect, so that barbarism would have lasted longer among us, had not this sudden impetus driven, they scarce knew why, all conditions of humanity in one enormous aggregate to Asia. The Grecian Emperor there however, little delighting at sight of such a universal movement, began to fear lest they should lose their way, and fall upon Constantinople instead of Jerusalem. Had he been skilful in such things as we are now, he might have honestly enriched himself by contract; for 'twas agreed

that Alexis should supply the army, and have all they should win, except the sepulchre: but this prince, mean and treacherous, and hasty to be safe where there was no danger, after they had torn Nice and Exorgum, and Antioch from the infidels, basely betrayed their armies more than once, and forced rough Boemund to turn his sword upon our eastern brethren in belief, to the perpetual scorn of those who write in latter times on the crusade. When this bold prince was taken by the Turks, Tancred, immortalized by Tasso's pen, supplied his place and freed Edeffa, native town of Hester the patriotic Jewess, who was known to Artaxerxes only by that name *Hadassa** in the seraglio. The word means *secret*: she had been sworn not to *reveal* her birth till, for the safety of her friends, 'twas necessary.

But Antioch, the city where Christians first were called so, where Peter, the apostle of our Lord, was first installed a bishop—Antioch was the scene which witnessed the disgrace of his most wretched namesake, who having conducted millions to that spot, left it at sight of war and ran away; shewing how ill a hermit's education suits with a soldier's coat. The spear, however, which had pierced our Saviour's side, found by some chance in a church dedicated to his earliest disciple, served as a rallying standard to our army, who fought valiantly to free the tomb of their Redeemer, while they openly disobeyed all his commands. In this cause it has been observed that Christians fought really less like men than lions, whose sanguinary rage was feeble when compared with theirs. The Amazon tribe were on this occasion distinguished, Fuller says, by carelessness of life, and ferocity in conquest; and where 100,000 Turks lay dead one day upon a field, to which we know that no artillery was brought, their savage valour must have been beyond conception. The Venetians signalized themselves among these combatants, 'twas they took Askelon, and did prodigious service at Ptolemais, Sidon, &c. When Baldwin was made King of Jerusalem, he presented them with the bronze horses which had drawn the car of

* Pronounce Atossa. She was the first lady celebrated for epistolary writing: she wrote upon small leaves of wood closed with bees wax.

Apollo in pagan days; they had a street, a church, and other privileges, but the Genoese enjoyed more solid profit in being recompensed with the third part of all the maritime towns. I must here shock the *retrospective* eye, by placing before it for an instant only, the fierce assault on the devoted city which was taken by storm, Friday, 5th of July, last year of the eleventh century, after an obstinate and pertinacious defence. That the slaughter of resisting warriors should be immense, surprises no one; but the decree of merciless severity, issued out by conquering Christians, to destroy every infidel found there on *the third day* after it *was taken*, drives the blood backward in a reader's veins. When pagan Rome had sacked Jerusalem, the gallant Titus gave command to spare, but the inhabitants forced on their own ruin. When papal Rome triumphed over the same guilty town, Godfrey and Eustace gave command to kill; nor turned their fight away when sucking babes, and suppliant mothers, sullied the pikes of soldiers with their blood. The inhuman massacre was Sunday's work, and the day on which our blessed Lord rose from the dead, was the time chosen to make a shambles of his sacred sepulchre. Yet although we confess these heroes disgraced Christ's doctrine while they avowed their faith in his divinity, let us be candid to their brave disinterestedness. Godfrey de Boulogne, when the crown was offered him, swore he'd not wear a coronet of gold where his Redeemer's brows were pierced with thorn: and Baldwin, whom they forced into the throne, said he would sit in it but to serve his brethren. A reign of fourteen years spent on that business only, proved they were no dissemblers, nor no hypocrites. Enthusiasm acting upon ignorance, produced a flame as when the chymist pours his aromattick oil on nitrous acid: the burst will not be hinder'd *even by vacuum*.

Rome heard the news with indecorous joy, and whilst (as a nation) they expressed desire of revenge insatiable upon the infidels, each individual now began to feel continuance of such destruction, as a cordial administered to meaner passions. Avarice prompted the Pope to persuade

fuade fecular princes, nobles, &c. to fet forward on the bloody pilgrimage; teaching the fick or lazy to commute their journey by large fums paid to his treafury for fervice of the holy crofs.

All the eftates fold up by madly pious adventurers, fell quickly into hands of churchmen, who by thefe fales became temporal barons, poffeffed of fiefs to an immense amount, particularly in France and England, where fovereigns, by this new fignal for a general chace, were eafily diverted from all thought of ftruggling to retain the right of investiture, now no longer in their power, or to fay truth, no longer in their heads.

Places of accuftomed worfhip were deserted, cathedrals dropt into decay, prayers were no longer faid in publick as they had been; and even private devotion was fo much difufed, that repetition of Pater-nofter, and Ave Maria then fupplied the place of thofe petitions to the Almighty, now known by the name of Liturgies, digefted into fettled forms of prayer; beads, therefore, grew needful, to remind people how often they faid over the fame thing.

The elegant word *rofary*, means a ftring of thofe beads like *dew-drops*, counted by morning light amid the fields, by innocent fimplicity courting the ear of Heaven, when it fheds on wood and bladed grafs *rofcida mella*.

New drefses of a fcarlet colour meanwhile adorned the ecclefiasticks upon days of gala,* fwelling their full-blown dignities, and expreffive of firm refolution to maintain them as fuch with their *blood*; and if any high fpirit was obferved likely to oppofe, or even complain of innovations, the Pope had a fure place to fend them to; the pilgrimage to Afia was in fuch cafes *compelled*; as Saul fent David againft the Philiftines to be rid of him, fays Fuller. All this time Pruffia, and part of Lithuania, were in a ftate of barbarifm; that they had never been converted is not true: they, like the Danes, had in the very early ages

* So called from *cala*, Arabick perhaps, meaning a *robe of honour*, as I have read.
been

been taught true faith by an old set of missionaries devoted to St. Vitus; they therefore founded somewhat like a church, and dedicated it to him: but having never learned to read, succeeding generations lost the true meaning, and easily relapsing into idolatry, they made a gigantick figure of the saint with four frightful heads, and called it *Su-antovit*, dancing round when Christian strangers were sacrificed, all this in so extravagant a manner, and accompanied by gestures so wild and without meaning, that northern nations called by the name of St. Vitus's dance, a nervous affection, inducing odd vagaries of the limbs. A species of the epilepsy, is, I believe, called so still in England, Denmark and Norway.

When the crusades had taught mankind, however, that force might be applied with good success to propagate our religion, some was sent out against these wretched pagans, who disliking this second mode of conversion, opposed it stoutly; and treated those who now tried to instruct them, with no small degree of brutality. Military orders were therefore instituted, brethren of the sword, knights of Christ, of St. John of Jerusalem, with numberless others. The Templars devoted themselves to care of the police; all highways being infested with banditti, and these gentlemen protected passengers *fabre à la main*.

A Nestorian heretick, however, as 'tis said, regardless of these orthodox associations, set up for himself somewhere in Cathay, he called his rank that of a Presbyter, but his rule was, in his circle, no less despotick than that of the pope at Rome: and Milton said most wisely, ages after;

“ That you may read full clearly in your charge,

“ New presbyter is but old priest wrote large.”

Wherever power is, 'twill make itself *be felt*. This man is known to history by name of Prester John; his sect grew numerous, and his successors so well knew how to maintain their ground, that they remained a body of themselves, firmly incorporated, till down to the later days of Gengis Khan. When after many *gehacks* or *zodiacks* had been

run

run through, they separated; and are now scarcely remembered in India. Quere indeed—Whether the *Dalay Lama* of our present day, is not the *Prefter John* of former times? Monf. de la Croze thinks so; and we knew nothing about the Gylongs of Thibet in the year 1100, I believe; but since commerce has made us acquainted with *their* œconomy and priesthood, we have known less, or *talked* less about Prefter John. Perhaps his connection with Christianity, as it was originally slight, merged with a lapse of time in the gulph of Unitarianism, and sinking there, regenerated in the Grand Lama; who, by Mr. Turner's account, considers some particular places to be sacred, as witnessing his *first* appearance in our world. Marco Polo seems to have derived the word *prefter* from presbyter, naturally enough; but there is a fiery meteor so called in the east, which the orientals possibly connected with the man's title, and the more willingly obeyed his behests.

The bishop of Chichester has the figure of Prefter John for his coat armour: I have enquired the reason, but in vain. If however, one squadron deserted the true standard, another returned to obedience. Monothelites, who held only one will and action in our Saviour, tired of those subtleties they never understood, were reconciled in the twelfth century, and came pouring down in troops from the top of Libanus, where they had retired from persecution in days of controversy, to join the general crusade, by name of Maronites. After Saladin's conquest, they indeed lapsed again, probably from too much talk with the Mahometans, into heretical unitarianism; but Clement VIII. brought them once more to renewed communion with Rome, and I myself saw their venerable bishop distributing his palm branches the Sunday before Easter, 1786. Whilst oriental echoes, however, repeat the heroism of Baldwin and Boemund, Godfrey and Eustace, with praises not yet forgotten; the meanness and duplicity of Alexis, the Greek emperor, form a very striking contrast to their characters. He would do nothing for the cause which could in any wise be avoided,
and

and for the little he *did* do, pressed the pope to unite both empires in *his* person. On refusal, this interested prince scrupled not the betraying a large body of leagued Christians into the hands of highly-provoked infidels. His son Emanuel too, having one day set upon a detachment of Turks, somewhere in Paphlagonia, putting them to the rout, and making a great slaughter: Alexis thought it necessary to make publick rejoicing, and create the youth a knight; but when the farce was finished, taking him sily to his own tent, he beat the boy with his two fists, calling him ass and gull, for doing the *Latins* work for them.

Truth is the *Latins*, so they called our western army, were much detested and despised by Greeks, who spoke of them on all occasions with dislike; and even complained that they had caused a plague in Asia, when from the scent of putrid carcases, joined to unusual heat, contagious fevers swept off no fewer than 50,000 Christians, the first half year after Jerusalem was taken. But we must see what follies were committing in Europe by those who staid at home: *Retrospection* will there be led to think, that people had a fixt design to *make* the world end by stopping future population, and murdering the present inhabitants. Twelve thousand Jews were massacred upon some slight pretence, and Bruges, in Flanders, not long built, was burned to ground, with a vast number of inhabitants. Yet no effects ensued: Fribourg was founded, and Utrecht was seen daily increasing; Dantzick too, must have been a place famous for trade, or else the story would soon fall to ground of the rich widow related in *Annales Belgicæ*, who gave the master of some ship commission to bring her thence, the most valuable commodity that could be found in that vast general mart. Her lover, the captain, loaded his vessel with *wheat*, which the proud dame disdaining, caused it all to be thrown overboard: heavy judgments, say the old books, followed such arrogance and folly. The haven grew a flat where they threw out the corn, at Staveren, a little port in Friezland; and made it dangerous landing

for the future. A strange disorder narrowed the widow's throat, and she was punished by being starved to death. The affecting story of Fagel, giving his lady her lover the brave Coucy's heart to eat, is of this period, if I remember rightly; she eat no more, but refused food and died. I fear the gallant Tancred set the example by his less justifiable cruelty. Fagel had jealousy to inflame his passions, yet Sigismunda's innocent attachment had scarce a lighter chastisement assigned her. Dryden and Furino have immortalized *her* sufferings—Howel and Burney vindicate *la dame aimée de Coucy*, from all but sentimental preference of her accomplished troubadour.

The names of Ubbo and Ingo, Nicholas, &c. fill up all Danish records with their struggles, to wrest that snowy region each from other. Ingo was a youth of slow parts, and his base uncle set him on a bough, which bending far over a rapid stream, broke with his weight, and he fell in the river; but having 'scaped with life from this misfortune, his tutor, bribed for the cruel purpose by Nicholas the heir, advised him to ride out upon a horse he could not rule, and by his death, in consequence of this experiment, made way for his patron. I well remember tales to this effect told here in England twenty years ago, when a young Irishman was tried for murder.

One worthie character relieves our *Retrospect* which sees with pleasure Charles surnamed the Good, first cousin to king Baldwin of Jerusalem, distributing at Ipres in a famine seventy-eight thousand loaves with his own hand, forbearing to touch bread himself seven weeks; and for this greatest of all publick benefits, because some private families were forced to suffer rough retrenchments on their luxuries, private resentment followed, and the Stratenfes caused this incomparable prince to be assassinated in the market-place. The word *assassin* brings us back to the east. The name was new, and in that country coined: the thing had, I fear, always existed since the second man was born into the world. But about A. D. 1140 dwelt in six cities of Syria a band of Mahometan owning no lord, and paying no subjection except

cept to their grand-master, who lived at Antaradus, a cluster of small habitations upon a hill, and was called by his congregated assembly the Old Man of the Mountain; a name since given by Voltaire, in undeserved derision, to the pope. At his command the dwellers in those tents ran and returned, and his commands were seldom issued but for murder, as he lived safe in *Affassinia*, such was the name of this lawless district, and no power dared approach the spider in his web. This monstrous engine levelled at human society lasted as far as to the year 1257; till when most of the deaths which could not be accounted for among the great men, were justly enough attributed to these *assassins*, who stabbed in the dark and poisoned for hire, retreating to their inaccessible mount when the black deed was done. King Almerick once hoped to have converted the grand-master, and was about to entertain his ambassador for that purpose; but a hot-headed templar, little suspecting the purport of his coming, killed the *assassin*, and from that hour it was settled hostility. To contend for our faith, but yet contend with charity; to hate the error, but pity those who had been led astray, endeavouring to convince, convert, console them; are qualities which literally *could* not then have had existence: such virtues were reserved for Fencelon, for Fleury, dwellers in a gentler soil, and times grown temperate by the experience of fruitless concussions. A character like theirs, while these concussions lasted, must have been crushed at once, its merits all unknown. And on that principle Peter Waldensis, a merchant of Lyons, having taught his followers a sort of quietism, wishing to reform their own manners and let their neighbours' opinions quite alone, could not keep out of harm's way in the *Pays de Vaud*. Witness the provençal verses quoted by Voltaire and Mr. Gray in the notes to his Bampton Lectures.

Que non volia maudir, ne jaura ne menti,
 N'occir, n'avroutar, ne prene de altray,
 Ne s'avengear de suo enemy,
 Los difons qu' es *Vaudes* et los *fesen morir*.

N n 2

And

And witness the terrible crusade set on foot against these same innocents long afterwards, by name of Albigeois; they were the relicks of the Vaudois: their sect never critically known, perhaps; but when they laboured for peace, like king David, the others made themselves ready to battle.

Peculiarities of good or ill practices seem entailed upon particular nations for a vast length of time. Alphonso Henriquez was the first sovereign who styled himself Duke of Portugal; but after the bloody battle of Orichia, where he overcame Ismarus and three other Moorish kings, whose heads at the moment I am writing adorn the arms of Marie Françoise Isabella, he was saluted king by his whole army. This man married his aunt by papal dispensation, and she, when a widow, wedded *his* brother Ferdinand; who, when she died, took Theresa, that very brother's daughter, to be his second wife. It is observable how such connection between degrees of kindred usually forbidden obtain in that still, more than in any other Christian land. Alphonso Henriquez had a fabulator, whose business in his bed-chamber every evening was to tell stories (*fabula*) till he fell asleep. Complaining however that the stories were too short, the disour invented one so long that during the recital he fell asleep as well as the king: "We will, says Henriquez, have this tale every night." The harper had a privilege to sit down, but the fabulator *stood* always when in royal presence; such was the etiquette. Physicians had fate down before the king ever since the year 424. (See Warton). *Contes à dormir debout* is an expression growing out of this custom, when the tale-teller himself *dropt asleep though standing*. Spain and Portugal were always nearly allied. Farinelli, almost in our own time, sung the *same* song, *Per quel caro amplesso, every night* to the king of Spain for eight years together: the Italians call the air by his Majesty's name at this moment. That pompous self-sufficiency which is supposed to distinguish Spaniards from other Europeans, was first observed in the twelfth century. Alphonso of Arragon was called Alphonso the Arrogant, *par equivoque*, and his successor,

successor, Peter de Taros was deposed in four months for excess of pride. From Ramirez gentler manners were expected, but he proved as haughty as his predecessors. A severe illness indeed brought him to humbler thoughts; he made long penance, and at length turned monk. But health and superciliousness returned together, and the distich

Dæmon languebat, monachus tunc esse volebat;
 Ast ubi convaluit, mansit ut ante fuit.

When the devil was sick, the devil a monk would be;
 But when the devil was well, the devil a monk was he—

was made on that occasion. A daughter of his, before he turned friar, named Petronilla, married the Earl of Catalonia, and added that province to the crown lands. Soon after which Alphonso, surnamed the Good and Wise, king of Castile and Leon, who being present at many battles saw the death of one hundred and twenty thousand Saracens, and who regained from his ambitious neighbours all they had torn from him, instituted the order of *Calatrava* or *Slip Fetter*, upon taking that town, by which act he considered his dominions as finally rescued from fetters long imposed on them. This prince made Toledo the metropolis; and calling it an imperial city, wished, but in vain, to be acknowledged emperor of Castile, &c. another curious proof of Spanish pride. Alphonso was oddly jealous of a lady whom he loved, and set a nobleman of high rank to court her; but the experiment being likely to end ill for all, it was put a finish to as oddly as it begun; for a troubadour who came to divert the king and grandees upon his birth-day, recited a tale like that in Don Quixote called *El Curioso Impertinente*; with which his Majesty being much struck, said to him, “Minstrel, your tale has good sharp salt in it, and excellent morality, “it shall be called *Le Jaloux Chatié* :” and so it was, and served the great Cervantes as a model. We ought to add how Alphonso presented the bard a bag of crowns; changed his conduct towards the lady,

lady, who married her new lover the nobleman, with a large dower bestowed by the sovereign, on condition they should neither of them ever more appear at court.

But Venice attracts more than a glimpse of *Retrospection*. While she was gaining laurels at the Holy Land, her province of Dalmatia rebelled; Michaeli and Bolani his son-in-law, dukes and doges of that day, reduced them however in a short time to obedience, Spalatro being taken; although the Padoani mischievously endeavoured to forward the evil by changing the course of the Brenta, then better known by name of Medoacus. After a slight punishment they too returned to their duty, and the republic kept prospering exceedingly, keeping in their own hands all trade with Grand Cairo, and having close connection beside with other powers, to whom they sold spices from the east with very great advantage. Gems now grew into an article of luxury in Europe, and to the Venetian ships or gallies all merchandize and all naval resistance to the common enemy was confided. At these crusades much therefore was found which our western inhabitants went not thither to look for, and some of their importations are now unobserved, because they are grown so common. But 'twas in opposition to these Venice gallies that the Turks always sent out an *emir* or *emeral*, whence Christians from that time called him an amiral* or admiral, who headed and commanded any fleet. Mosaick work was new learned on these oriental excursions; and Italy, ever first to adopt the elegancies of life, displayed such diligence, that old Falcandus the historian of Sicily informs us, how in this century the cathedral church at Palermo had its walls decorated with that ornamental incrustation. But Constantinople had preserved many arts after Rome had lost all sight of them, the sovereign still residing safely *there*, while Goths and Vandals sacked the *deserted* city, and left few traces of its pristine greatness. About this period likewise, upon some dispute between the Duke of Bavaria

* Milton says *amiral*, without the *d*.

and

and Conrad III. emperor of the west, sprung the first germ of that long-lasting feud between the Gwelfs and Gibelines, which, though it distracted and even desolated Europe for so many years together, seems to have left at last only a faint remembrance of the folly upon the mind of an historick reader, like the old contest of the centaurs and lapithæ upon that of a classick and mythological student. Conrad meantime, who built Ulm in Suabia, so called *ab ulligine*, from the quantity of *elm* trees that grew there on the banks of the Danube, took the town of Winsberg in Germany, granting only the women's lives, and as much household stuff as they could carry away with them. Those who were married coming out each of them loaded with a rebel husband to fling at the king's feet, the gallant sovereign rewarded their fidelity by pardoning *all* the inhabitants of a town possessing such conjugal virtue. Our sweet Spectator calls the city *Hensberg*, and makes the prettiest story of it imaginable; but he, as Johnson says of Goldsmith, touched nothing he did not improve.

Nullum quod tetigit non ornavit.

Had I *their* powers to make *Retrospection* pleasing, I would endeavour to draw on my readers so as to give the remaining part of this long chapter to the affairs of France, whose king Philip went not to Palestine, detained by Bertrade wife to Fulke of Anjou, who had left her own husband and prevailed upon her lover to betray his son Lewis le Gros, whom she dosed afterwards with ineffectual poison, *and was forgiven*. This Lewis displayed the standard of St. Denys, the celebrated *oriflamme*, in his disputes with neighbouring nations, and on his death-bed drew his ring from off his finger and put it on that of his son Louis le Jeune, who married Eleanor of Guienne and Poictou; and accepted the trust of a great kingdom, which his father told him should be governed only for the people's good. Truth is, they had as yet little to do with any arts of government. The barons there, as in England, were all feudal lords; but the crusading fever and consequent delirium having im-

pelled

pelled many of them to fell up their possessions, Lewis purchased ; and the small towns having besides bought their freedom from their chiefs, dropt to the king of course, who becoming protector to them, became master too ; and the chain of aristocracy began to rust in that country before any other throughout Europe. The *Franks* were from the beginning first to be *free* ; and now in an old deed, preserved till lately among the the treasures of St. Denys, appears for the first time to our *retrospective* eye the word from whence comes the *dauphin* of France : *Guigo comes qui vocatur DELPHINUS* made some exchange of lands with Hugh Comte de Grenoble ; the date was 1142, and after the middle of the 12th century the title was become fixt and hereditary. Soon after this, or perhaps seven years before, the house of Bourbon took its rise from Archibald Comte de Bourbon, or *Borbonius*. His device when in the wars of Palestine was a globe, and written round it *orbi bonus*. But we must not forget old England.

C H A P. XVII.

TO THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1200.

WHEN the soul of our second William, furly to maintain his rights, and faucy with hope of extending them, was fled; his next brother, and heir of course to a prince who had no children, was Robert duke of Normandy, who had approved his valour both in Europe and Asia; but he being engaged among the chiefs who leagued for the recovery of Palestine, heard not what passed, in the New Forest Hampshire; while Henry, the Conqueror's youngest son, was, happily for him, *upon the spot*. Active and vigilant, and as it appears wholly unrestrained by fraternal affection, or principles of justice, from seizing what of right belonged to another, he hurried to Winchester, and sternly demanded the keys of a castle there, where the regalia were in those days kept. Breteuil, to whom the dead king had confided his treasure, remonstrated a while and then resisted; but Henry drew his sword, and the Earls of Warwick and Meulant swore to abet his pretensions, which Breteuil dared no longer dispute, and the coronation was soon performed in St. Peter's church, now Westminster Abbey. A general council, the origin of parliament, was summoned; and to those who composed it the new sovereign made a speech, giving as a reason for his aspiring to command them, that he was born after his father was crowned here and acknowledged, alluding perhaps to the favourite distinction among the Greek emperors, when they had a son born in the purple, as they called it, *porphyrogenitus*. Henry was graced with learning, and knew these things; he had been surnamed Beauclerc for his accomplishments; but his auditors found themselves more

easily persuaded by an argument of greater solidity : he offered them a charter, mitigating in some measure the royal prerogative, and annulling as it was express'd, evil customs and *illegal* exactions, by that very epithet expressing that there were existent laws, and that his father broke them. Princes well assured of their own just title, are seldom forward in appealing thus to the immediate interests of their people, while those who accidentally, or by favour of concurring circumstances, come in to suddenly acquired or scarcely expected dignity, willingly part with a small share of power to preserve the rest inviolate ; nor does this trick of conciliation often answer as to purchasing affectionate regard, which ever naturally follows the true heir ; and the resiliency towards Robert of Normandy was seen the moment he arrived in France ; but by loitering on his journey with the fair daughter of Conversana, the soft climate of Naples relaxed his martial spirit ; and though many barons from here deserted to his standard, he wished only for peace he said, and that on almost any terms. Whoever says so, shall be sure of bad ones ; he lost England and Normandy both ; but I believe, although he died in Wales, that he was buried at Glo'ster : there is a recumbent figure of him there in the cathedral. Henry meanwhile shewed himself no hypocrite ; he granted a charter and privileges to the city of London, which they have kept with more attention than our kings bestowed on prerogatives imagined less liable to violation ; he willingly gave up the right of investiture, which placed all power over churchmen in Rome alone ; and flattered by Pope Innocent's admiration of his literary abilities, compromised the matter by making the bishops pay homage to *him* as their superior lord for their *temporal* baronies only. Much was enjoyed by individuals under this reign, which had been harshly enough denied in the foregoing ; for we see Rufus dispose of ecclesiastical preferments plainly in the old story of two monks coming to court for purpose of purchasing an abbot's place, offering each of them magnificently, sedulous to outbid each other, nothing doubting but he should have it who gave most. A
third

third stood by however, and said nothing: "And what wouldst *thou* do
"to obtain this rich living?" said the king. "My duty," replied the
friar. "And what wouldst *give* then?" "Not a penny, my liege, such
"gifts are against my conscience; but here I stand to wait on him
"whom my lord shall ordain abbot." "Now by my soul thou only
"deserv'st it," cried William, and sent the other two *to wait on him*.
But these prerogatives no more existed, and Henry never seemed to re-
gret their loss. It is the nature of knowledge to wish its own diffusion,
and 'tis its nature when diffused, to seek an empire over the *minds* of
men, forgetful of all rights over their *persons*. Innocent II. had in-
dulged this prince with a dispensation to marry Matilda, only child of
Malcolm, King of Scots, by a daughter of Edgar Atheling. This united
the Norman and Saxon blood once more; and the old English families
found daily cause of rejoicing in the Queen's influence, who brought
from her convent a strong attachment to family notions, and who
brought an heir of uncommon promise for our future sovereign.
Henry recollecting how easily crowns may be usurped, sent this youth
to the continent for education, and likewise for the purpose of having
him recognized as lawful heir in Normandy; Duke Robert's valiant
son, William Longsword, who raised rebellion there, and is some-
times called Clito by historians, having been at length subdued.
As they came home however, in order to be happy, a boat overloaded
with princes of the blood founder'd at sea, and not one soul was saved
except a butcher from Rouen. Fitzstephen the Captain, called out to
that fellow—"Is the *Prince* safe?" Hearing him answer *no*—"Then I
"will not survive him," was the reply: when quitting suddenly the
mast to which he had clung, the faithful loyalist dropt in despair amidst
those flashing billows, which swallow'd up a parent's, and a nation's hopes.
Henri de Beauclerc never smiled more; his various acquirements sup-
plied him with no comforts for such an unexpected, unprepar'd for
shock; but piety soothed what learning could not divert: he founded
the monastery at Reading, in Berks, the priory of Merton, in Surrey,
and built the church at Chichester, part of which still subsists; then
O o 2 dying,

dying, bequeathed his kingdom to a daughter Matilda, now his only child, and married to the emperor, but left by him a widow without children. This lady, though her father's sole surviving progeny, never gained settled possession of her inheritance, to which Stephen earl of Blois pretended, being grandson to the Conqueror by Adela: he succeeded; and like his predecessor, tried at securing his new power by concessions. But Henry, a wise and politick prince, desirous to control his barons' insolence, had freed of those below them *all he could*, and granted immunities to commercial corporations; sure check on aristocratick pride; while Stephen, perpetually harassed by his cousin and her partizans, courted the nobles to support *his* claim, and willingly tolerated that injustice and oppression in others, by which he himself had risen to the throne. Truth is, *la loi du plus fort* was best worth listening to in days like those, when bishops, lords, &c. built castles for defence, and dug dungeons in which to throw such hapless mortals as ventur'd to oppose their tyrannous proceedings. Hume says all England was then filled with petty fortresses, of which I believe some yet remain as specimens, particularly Arundel Castle, where the queen dowager resided, widow to Rufus, having honoured the Earl of Suffex with her hand, considering that connexion as no disgrace at all, while proud Matilda* wedded to Geoffrey Plantagenet, son of the Duke d'Anjou, seemed to consider her own second marriage as a serious misfortune, although her husband was a sovereign prince, lineally descended from Charles *Martel*. His mother had some *cloth of frieze* about her indeed, being of the family of Baldwin earl of Flanders, before the arrival in it of Judith, daughter to Charles the Bald, and Matilda had a son by his descendant: for whose sake, after battling against Stephen unsuccessfully for eighteen or twenty years, she resigned those pretensions she never could maintain. David king of Scots abetted his great nephew in his claim, and 'tis astonishing to

* But although he, Maire de Paris, was the first man of the eighth century, this lady liked a *lance*, she said, better than a *hammer*.

think how our own warlike sovereign supported himself through a long reign of everlasting contention. When his sole offspring *Eustace* died however, there was no more to contend for; and the empress thought when *her* son was promised the succession, her toils to obtain a present crown might cease. Stephen was permitted to enjoy it for his life; which lasted but a short time after his child's decease; and Maude, or Matilda, made her own epitaph before her haughty spirit fled, and left the imperial clay. The words express what probably was all she ever thought upon, her own dignity; but they express it very neatly—

Magna ortu, magnoque viro, sed maxima partu,
Hic jacet Henrici Filia, sponsa, parens.

Young Henry now married to Eleanor, divorced wife of Louis le Jeune, King of France, who brought with her an enormous fortune, Guienne and Poictou, which her first husband gave back to be rid of her, ascended our throne with wishes of prosperity from all, and such advantages by his queen's vast dower, that he resolved to have rich pageants exhibited, and tales told at his coronation both of *Wepying and of Game*. Historians therefore, jongleurs and diseurs, (jesters were not come in) assembled at the English court in troops—minstrels and troubadours. The king himself knew how to touch a musical instrument; he had a harp value 120 pence, and the tuning hammer cost 20 pence more; and both were kept with the drinking horn and chess board, as secondary to the regalia alone. These drinking horns had names given them, as we see by *Hirlas*, celebrated in a poem of *Owain Cyreillog*, Prince of Powys, in the year 1160. The song is like those of Offian. “Pour out, oh cup-bearer, sweet and pleasant mead from
“the horn of wild *oxen*; *Hirlas* shining with brightness: we will drink
“to the souls of departed heroes.” The bugle or *beugle* horn is so called from the lowing of oxen. *Beugler* is to *low*; an ox's horn is a *beugle* horn. Such was the state of belles-lettres and society, while castles of independent barons, bold and turbulent, maintained whole armies of fighting

fighting men for their defence, long trains of people too for their diversions; wretches who lived but by softening the ferocity of their benefactors: fools, dwarfs, and monsters increased the domestic groupe, till he who owned the house was even unable to enumerate his own devourers. Internal commerce was then scarce a name; connexion with the metropolis was difficult; friends who resided in Wiltshire sent a token* to tell those in Norfolk that they were yet living; and little was known in one county of what excesses were committed in another. Famines, consequent on such a system of life and manners, happened frequently; and the wonder is how Henry should have felt a wish of adding Ireland to his already extensive but ill-governed domain. Whilst other princes however were engaged in the crusade, our young monarch thought less of empty honour than of solid profit. His rich wife, although much older than himself, brought sons; and for soft moments, the bower of fair Rosamond at Woodstock was constructed: Eleanor was of a jealous temper however, and having been in former times suspected of fondness for a young Saracen, when she accompanied her first husband to Palestine, she watched the second with unremitting diligence, and poisoned his pleasures if she did not dispatch his mistress. Louis le Jeune was the gayest among the leagued princes: Fauchet tells how he took a troubadour to the Holy Land among other *gentilleffes* and expensive articles of show. The gems he brought home with him were seen by me at St. Denys in 1774. His queen Alicia, who survived him after his long reign, inclosed his body in a silver coffin, knowing the king's taste for splendour, and forgetting, says Fauchet, the simplicity of our ancestors. Our English monarch meanwhile, preparing to subjugate Ireland, obtained a bull from the Pope, with permission to convert them, his holiness not knowing that they had long been Christians, and Henry suppressing

* There is a tradesman's token (or was in 1786) still extant in the cabinet of a Mr. Southgate; the figure is in a Gentleman's Magazine of that year, but I saw no date to it.

the intelligence, that he might be furer of leave to invade them. The pontiff indeed, happy to find that this young fovereign, though negligent of religion's interests in Asia, was watchful over them at home, granted him all he asked, and charged the Irish to receive Henry as their liege lord, paying the regular tax of a penny a house to Rome. This bull was accompanied by a ring in sign of investiture like that Pope Alexander gave the Venetians; but although we were not then married to Ireland, it appears that our union with that island will long outlive theirs to the Adriatick.

At this critical moment, O'Rourk and O'Connor, Dermot the boisterous, and Torlogh, surnamed Righ O'Fresaura, *a king with reluctance*, or but half-willingly obeyed, were princes of Breffney, Leinster, and Connaught. They were engaged in furious contests about the beauteous coquet Dervoghral, daughter of Meath, but wife of O'Rourk, meaning Roderick: from whose arms the noisy valour and pretended piety of Dermot had seduced her affection. When this last named chief had secured Heaven's blessings by enormous donatives to some religious houses, he, with help of a bastard brother, confederate in his schemes, put the lady in a sack, her head only out, threw her across a horse, and rode away with her, whose faint cries, say historians, evinced the feebleness of her resistance. O'Rourk, however was not inclined so to submit, or endure without resentment the tyranny of gigantic Dermot; seventeen of whose lords, we are told, had died by his cruelty, or lost their eyes, whilst O'Loglan protected him in his pride. The Breffnian chief then resented, opposed and conquered; and baffled Dermot fled to England, giving Henry the opportunity he had long sighed for. Troops were prepared and sent, but our king had no leisure to put himself at their head, although the false pretence of reinstating the prince of Leinster covered his real designs commodiously enough. Strongbow was sent over, and our king remained at home, having quarrelled with Thomas o'Becket, companion of his youth, and friend to his riper years.

This

This nobleman, of ancient lyneage and good Saxon blood, had long enjoyed court favour; having been made provost of the Tower, secretary of state, and high chancellor of England. Happy for both had his preferment stopt even there—but being sent ambassador to France, he amazed all Paris with his pomp and opulence, making himself served with a degree of splendour never observed before in any subject's retinue. Yet although for forty days Becket maintained upon the frontiers of Normandy 1200 knights and 4000 vassals which composed their train, Fitz-Stephen tells us, that his apartments here at home were covered with good hay alone in winter, and in summer green rushes, which he considers too as no small luxury: for fear no doubt is his expression, lest the great nobles who paid court to him, being too numerous to sit down at table, should soil their gay clothes sitting on a *dirty floor*; by which we learn that benches were the sole accommodations then even in a house of such magnificence.

Wales seems to have been more civilized—Watson quotes Powell to prove, that at the carousal made by Rhees ap Gryfydd, A. D. 1176, in the castle of Cardigan*, *stools* were set; when the bards tried their wit and strength of song against each other, and rich gifts rewarded the overcomers. Rhees's own folks were observed to win most prizes, and the next year he attended the parliament at Oxford, where with his numerous retinue he was magnificently entertained by Henry, who loved the bards, and was the first of all our kings who kept a regular poet-laureate: he was called Maistre Henri d'Avranches, his grace's *versificator*, and had 100s. a year pension from the privy purse, more than 100l. now. North Britain was behind hand; when Alexander, surnamed the Fierce, was called so for endeavouring to suppress a band of half-licenced robbers, called the Thieves of Ross: he might with greater propriety have been called *Alexander the Just*. A poor woman having on his return from this expedition begged a boon at his feet,

* Abertivi.

saying that the young son of the earl of Mornai had killed her husband, a man of mean degree, only for his amusement, that he might see what death was: Alexander swore he would not leave the spot he stood on, till the youth had been very severely *punished*, and kept this word. Coming home fatigued from his long journey he fell asleep, but waking, found the bed-chamber all filled with the surviving thieves of Rosse, who, in revenge for that roughness with which he had used their fellows, corrupted the king's chamberlain, and were about to murder *him*, had he not, with fierceness and strength equal to his courage and wisdom, seized the traitor by the throat, strangling him instantly by the firm and sudden grasp: then falling on the others sword in hand, killed six before assistance was collected, and two fled.

This brave prince, husband to Sybilla daughter of William the Conqueror, was by her father to David, who built Holyrood-house, punished corrupt judges, and in his dispute with Stephen king of England, obtained a grant of Cumberland, which had been since Macbeth's time lost to the Scots, and which his son Malcolm, surnamed the Maiden, lost again to Henry II. of England, of whose kindnesses to Becket we have taken a short *Retrospect*, without obtaining yet one glimpse of reason for them. But to superfluous and uncommon bounty, some undiscovered motive may be almost always suspected. Europe mean time polished apace; Haffnia in Denmark was built, since called Copenhagen, or the town of trade. *Cophen* means cheapening, I've heard, and *hagen* a small aggregate of houses, whence *the Hague* in Holland, first village of the world: quere, notwithstanding, if it was not *Copenhaven*, a nearer etymology, and I suppose it was.

Alexandria in Lombardy, was founded and named by Pope Alexander III. who gave the ring to the Venetians, and reserved the right of canonizing departed saints to the see of Rome; but from the days of Paschal II. who first signed the year of his own reign not the emperor's; papal power had been every day increasing, 'spite of pretenders, anti-popes and schisms, which, though they troubled the peace, were not permitted to check the prosperity of the church. Some of them

indeed appear to have increased it. John de Gaeta, otherwise Gelafius II. reigning but six weeks, prevailed upon a princess of Etruria to leave her whole possessions to the holy see. Calixtus learned to laugh at imperial power; Innocent II. took towns and changed the forms of government at his pleasure—Lucius was killed in an affray fighting for his prerogatives, and Eugenius maintained and augmented them by intrigue. The king of England supposed to be a penetrating character, (though 'tis plain he knew not the heart of either his son or his friend) saw with alarm, that Rome was about to govern the whole world, a discovery which needed no penetration; and he resolved to make Becket a stumbling block to its advancement. The chancellor became archbishop of Canterbury by his desire, who from that moment gave himself a competitor, not a companion.

Filled with ideas of his new duties and a deep reverence for his high and sacred office, Becket *now* thought all complaisance derogatory to the station he was placed in, and considered himself as guardian to rights more important than those of a monarch. His gaiety was fled, and his good humour dried away by pious austerities, which Henry, his old intimate and playfellow could scarcely believe sincere; but which were dictated by the most solemn opinion of their being indispensable, and were at last of all sealed with his blood. The pope had long been appealed to in all ecclesiastical cases, and of late his decision had been sought in civil disputes, which when Becket was chancellor, he joined the king in objecting to, and signed with all his heart those councils of Clarendon forbidding such appeals, of which the moment he was made archbishop, he claimed the resumption. His master was enraged—the more enraged because duped by himself and grievously disappointed; but the prelate now openly declared, he owned no master except God and the pope, who was himself an Englishman, Adrian IV. surnamed Breakspear: of whom there is now in the library at Lambeth, a paraphrase of the pater-noster, beginning

Ure fadyr in hefen riche,
Thi nam be halyed everliche;

and

and who expected compliance, not resistance from his countryman, Henry; his conduct towards Becket now was such however, that he left the kingdom in disgust, and retired to Rome. The king more irritated by this step, drove all his domesticks and relations after him—prohibited all future appeals to the holy see, making himself supreme head of his own church, and cutting off the feet or thrusting out the eyes of refractory priests, enforced by cruelties a momentary obedience. Adrian 'tis true, meditated a rough revenge, but swallowing a wasp in his glass of wine, left the execution of it to his successor, who received Becket with more than equal politeness, appointed him a residence, pension, &c.; but what provoked his sovereign most of all, he sent him back to England once again, commanding him to resume there all his former functions. Henry now tried to terrify the pontiff, by leaguings with his worst enemy Frederick Barbarossa, emperor of Germany, and by shewing symptoms of intent to support Paschal III. as anti-pope. But Alexander having triumphed over all his foes, and made Frederick hold the stirrup while he mounted his mule, as protostrator, so the Greek emperors called that office, 'twas the king of England's turn to feel alarmed, lest by excommunication all his projects might be ruined. To secure his throne then, although his person might be insulted, he hastened to associate his eldest son; not doubting but it would always be in his power to direct the *boy*, and see things going his own way at least, if not by his own immediate authority. But Henry was again the dupe of his own refinement in politicks, for in order to give additional splendour to a ceremony by which this *very* young prince was to receive into his hand the reins of government, his father waited on him *pro forma* in the hall, where 'twas remarked by some of the courtiers, that never mortal could have been more royally attended:—"Why marvel ye, lords? (was the youth's prompt reply) ye see the son of a *count*—do ye not? serving the son of a *king*."

Thus every thing tended to force refractory Henry into a reconciliation with his bishop, who having had the better through the whole

contest, wished it sincerely: they met therefore, and parted civilly, not kindly; the monarch's fullen soul refused the kiss of peace. He went to his occasional court at Baieux in Normandy, and Becket settled on his diocese in Kent. Hitherto our hearts have gone against the sovereign, for one can on no occasion pity *him*, who seeking to make a man his tool, finds him his scourge: but Becket now accustomed to church splendour bustle in a new character, had lost all taste for tranquil duties and an evangelical life: he felt that part of his office as most important which best suited his own restless and impatient spirit: some errors had been committed in his absence, and eager at least, if not criminally hasty to evince his fiery zeal; he drove out and confiscated the effects of all the luckless ecclesiasticks who had been temporizing no doubt, perhaps resigning some privileges which they ought to have retained. The banished clergy hastened to Baieux, and kindled Henry's temper to a flame: in the first transport of his anger he exclaimed—"Have I no friend to free me from this haughty prelate?" and perhaps thought no further on the words he had uttered. By four gentlemen of his bedchamber however, they were construed into a signal for assassination: they swore secrecy to each other, and revenge of their master's quarrel; took ship immediately, and proceeding to the archiepiscopal palace at Canterbury, followed, and with inextinguishable rage, murdered the heaven-confiding priest of God upon his altar.

Whoever was in fault before, this stroke united all men's minds against Henry, who had encouraged a black and sacrilegious massacre, and it is above all things curious to observe, how by his death the bishop gained that ground, which his hot spirit was in danger of losing to the church, like Sampson killing more enemies in his last moments, than in all the tenor of his hostile conduct; but the king was in earnest shocked at *this* proceeding: the recollection of past friendship, and their youthful intimacies all recurred, and whilst a character so open and intrepid claimed admiration from a warrior-prince, a sanctity once pure, and always venerable, demanded it of every Christian hearer. Henry
endured

endured the heaviest penances without repining, submitted his hitherto inflexible spirit to Pope Alexander's discretion, gave up at once all he had gained of independence from the see, and glad to escape personal pilgrimage to Palestine, commuted his journey with enormous sums, and turned his thoughts once more to the subjugation of Ireland.

Frederick Barabarossa meanwhile, emperor of the west, having long contended in vain against the establishment of that power to whose dominion over the whole world force, fraud and accident alike combined; began to sigh for peace, seeing that whatever side Rome took, she as of old was sure to be victorious. St. Mark's church Venice was the theatre of *his* submissions. Having borne up the Pope's train to the altar, he prostrated himself there before it and before him, received the holy sacrament at his hand; and in that place is the stone yet to be seen where Alexander III. 168th bishop of Rome, set his foot on the throat of Frederick emperor of Germany, saying, "It is written "that thou shalt tread upon the asp and the basilisk, and trample the "lion under thy feet." The potentate last trampled on, manifested a lion's spirit. When Saladine had retaken Jerusalem after the death of Godfrey, Eustace, and Baldwyn, Frederick, by command of the Holy See, and to atone for former opposition to its authority, took the field for Asia, covering its plains with one hundred and fifty thousand followers. He defied the sultan to single combat, took Iconia by assault, and after performing prodigies of valour, died bathing in the river Cydnus, where he was seized with a sudden cramp and drowned in sight of numberless friends, who thought he was diving, as he often did, to shew them his dexterity. The King of France meanwhile, somewhat disgusted of these oriental expeditions by the past gallantries of queen Eleanor, and somewhat weary of submitting to that whimsical tyranny of the monks who made him shave his beard, and by that means revolt the fastidious heiress of Guienne and Poictou from his disfigured person, returned to Paris; there cultivating the fine arts, and filling his realm with poets, minstrels, troubadours, &c. A court
of

of love, and I believe a court of honour too were instituted: knighthood was the sole happiness desired by men of rank, and amorous passion the grand pledge of their existence. Romance, and love and chivalry were the pastimes of a gay nation, who, in the days we speak of, gave the *ton* to Europe; whilst old Rome, completely revived under ambitious Alexander, gave the *law*. The mixture of devotion with worldly interest produced the colouring we have seen given to political life, and *Retrospection* will observe the tint taken by literature from the odd effervescence of piety and romance, in the prelude to the epistle upon St. Stephen's day.

Entendès toutes à cheft sermon,
Et clair et lai tutes environ;
Contès vous vueille la pation,
De Saint Estieul *le baron*.

Listen to this discourse profound,
Ye clerks and laymen all around;
For here St. Stephen will be found
A baron suff'ring many a wound.

'Tis curious enough to see that not even a saint could excite their compassion in those days, if he were not a nobleman, a knight, or a hero; nor could the most eminent character of antiquity engage their attention, if he was not a saint. Thus, in defiance of Anachronism, they had St. Theseus, and St. Alexander, and the *Baron* Stephen, who, while *Count Paul* took charge of the knight's garments who *jousted* with him, was unfairly robbed of his life in an appropriate field, not *Campo Franco*: such was the state of *belles-lettres* under Louis le Jeune. Our Temple church yet standing was dedicated in this reign by Heraclius, patriarch of Jerusalem; and when King Henry went through Wales to Ireland, he was entertained at Pembroke castle by a company of Welsh bards, who sung, as Selden tells us, extemporaneous compositions of their own, in praise of King Arthur and his exploits. As they

they must have known that the sovereign was on his march, I would not be sure that all was improvise. There was a metrical history of saints' lives however compiled now, or within a few years after this time, for St. Thomas o' Becket is among them, and our rainy patron too,

Seinte Swippin ♂ confesseure was here of Engellhonde,
Beside Wyncheesterre was ibore as ic understonde.

The MS. was given to the Bodleian library by a Mr. Vernon in Charles the first's reign, as I remember, and is eminently curious and beautiful. 'Tis called *sowlhele* or *salus animi*, foul-heal; and some odd accounts of the female saints, their temptations and escapes, were selected thence by the tale-tellers for recital, when their patrons were sick or low-spirited, or going early to bed could not sleep. The Golden Legend was written afterwards by Giacomo di Voragine a noble Genoese. He borrowed some facts from Sowlhele, and Matthew of Westminster in 1375 made a sort of recueil, or, as we call them now, beauties, from both, and entitled it aptly enough Florilegus. But the saints began a little to lessen in number, and of course the tales; for Pope Alexander wisely decreed, that no one should canonize except himself, a step become quite indispensable: for till his time all the high-church dignitaries bestowed this honour at their own discretion; and *Hugh*, archbishop of Rouen, had solemnly commanded Gualterius to be prayed to, and his reliques to be worshipped, though a man in many respects objectionable; besides that the sovereign pontiff found it impossible to enumerate, much less judge the merits of candidates so distant and so various. This aristocratick privilege therefore of his ecclesiasticks he very discreetly broke, and ended the catalogue with our St. Thomas. And now *Roma triumphans* saw her unopposed dominion over the *sea* completely acknowledged by the republick of Venice, on receiving the famous ring with which their doge for six succeeding centuries annually espoused the Adriatick, upon the
day

day and with the words suggested by Alexander III. *Heaven* was become by this last act of selecting and arranging its inhabitants, this pope's exclusive territory, and those who had tried to resist the papal power on *earth* were not likely to resist it long. The lordly lion thus divides a slaughtered bull: "The fore-quarters are mine, you see (speaking to the beasts who hunted in his train), because I am strongest to struggle with a prey; the hind-quarters, because I am swiftest to seize upon it; the head and neck are mine in right of sovereignty, being acknowledged head over all quadrupeds; and for the rest, if any yet remains, *dispute it you who dare.*" Alphonso Henriquez was a favourite with the lion; he had a passion for being emperor, at least *king* of Portugal: they were all dukes till then. This fancy found encouragement at Rome, whence a grant was made out to this wise fellow, bestowing on him his own dominions as a gift, and permitting other potentates to style him king.

At no distant period one of the Alphonfos of Castile was inflamed with a luckless passion for a *Jewess*, surnamed Hermosa, of her astonishing beauty. When the nobles however had agreed to massacre this new Esther, from horror at the idea of a Christian prince's connection with one whose ancestors were stained with their Redeemer's blood, they entered her chamber, and felt themselves nearly disarmed by her soft supplications. Death or immediate baptism were offered her: but the warm-headed infidel, steady to her strong persuasion, sprung up from the humiliating posture she had been using, and when she heard the word Baptism, rushed with sudden violence upon their swords. Her royal lover hearing how all had ended, put on a friar's coat, leaving the world and throne, and died of grief and abstinence in seven months. Pope Alexander, in consideration of his penitence, permitted his corpse burial in the royal vault; and received with no small pleasure the application of his mortified opponent, Henry of England, who was unwillingly forced to recur for Roman aid against the turbulent and ambitious sons brought

brought him by Elinor, who having injured her first husband by her intrigues, perplexed her second with that spirit of jealousy which naturally disturbs the peace of a woman wedded to a man fifteen years at least younger than herself. She inspired the two cadets with an idea that *her* possessions were at her own disposal, and promised to place them as independent earls of Guienne and Poictou, her own hereditary dominions, if they would favour and accompany her flight from a country she detested. Geoffrey and Richard agreed; and the queen's disguise, a man's coat, was prepared and even put on, when she was seized by King Henry's orders, and conducted to a merited confinement. The youths, already possessed of her instruments to concede the provinces for their use, and happy to leave so troublesome a companion behind, spurred forward, and were soon in a state of open rebellion; nor did the pope hurry himself to check the progress of what was likely to torment his old antagonist, who turning on his enemies, faced them on every side; fell on his false friend Louis of France, who assisted the children of his quondam wife; defeated him more than once, defended from all their attempts his Norman dominions, and entered Rouen in sight of the French army, where were his two sons armed in the field against him. William of Scotland meantime, at their instigation, making a terrible inroad upon the north, advanced to Alnwick, and was so completely routed, that as a punishment for having invaded England in her king's absence, Henry insisted on his paying homage to him as liege lord of the *whole* island, and even kept Edinburgh castle for a short time in his own hands, to prove his sovereignty over both realms.

Ireland was subdued meantime by Strongbow, earl of Strigul; but our monarch, jealous from proof of what mankind had shown themselves towards *him* at least, fancied the Earl's intent might be to conquer for *himself* and not his master. This suspicion being further confirmed by Strongbow's marriage with proud Dermot's daughter, he hastened over with five hundred knights, in order to receive that fealty

which on his approach was instantly bestowed, and the island annexed for ever to our crown.

Hume gives the wisest reason possible why this acquisition was of so little advantage: “ Few people, says he, could be persuaded to go
“ live on this new neighbour nation; so that men born there and
“ never finally subdued, retained animosity towards those conquerors
“ who only just kept them down, and not destroyed them; over-
“ whelming by superiority of numbers, as was the true method in
“ those barbarous times, so as to put it completely out of their power
“ ever to rise again.” The times were even yet *very* barbarous. Witness the story of *Lech Lavar*, a large flat stone, which had served as the top of a cromlech in druidical days, and to which a woman wildly apparell’d made a loud and sudden appeal for justice, as King Henry pass’d near St. David’s in his return from Ireland. Her fearful cries and mad gesticulations affected our liege’s spirits very strongly, adds Giraldus Cambrensis,* who tells the tale. But such stones were not peculiar to Wales. Borlase, in his account of Cornwall, tells a story of a hooting karn, so called even in his time, from the prophetick sounds it was supposed to utter, when, as our sweet poet Thomson says,

Sighs the sad genius of the coming storm,
And up amongst the loose disjointed cliffs
And fractur’d mountains wild, the brawling brook
And cave presageful send a hollow moan,
Resounding long in list’ning Fancy’s ear.

The learned Keyfler, setting forth the superstitious notions of our septentrionists much later than this period, says with what solemnity

* Giraldus Cambrensis, who is surely as proud of his family as any Welshman can be, says that Henry II. was jealous of him, and stopt his preferment because he was of a line so long traced and so princely. His tale of the bishop’s disour diverting his master with stories of sacred history, which after all were never to be found when sought for in the Bible, is exquisitely pretty and good for illustration. The servant turned out a *devil* after all: such tricks are always *devilish*.

they

they approached black and conical stones,* abodes and oracles of demons, as they deemed them. We read in the Holmeria Saga of Norway, how Indridus, their chieftain, lay in wait for his enemy Thorstenus; and seeing him come out to consult the stone deity, he couch'd close behind it, and heard these words pronounced to his foe before the morning cock crew.

Tu huc
Ultima vice
Morti vicinis pedibus
Terram calcasti:
Certè enim antequam
Sol splendeat
Animosus Indridus
Odium tibi rependet.

Heedless of thy approaching fate,
Thou treadst this holy ground;
Last step of life! thy guilty breast,
E'er Phœbus gilds the ruddy east,
Must expiate
Thy murderous hate,
With many a mortal wound.

'Tis needless to say how Indridus, starting up, flew to the combat, and fulfilled the prophecy. Poland was a little and but a little more enlightened. When Miceflaus reigned, the barons spiritual and temporal, butchered his peasant subjects for their sport, and the king laughed at it. A woman was suborned to beg a boon of him—when granted, she told him, that her servants were so negligent and cruel, they suffered all her sheep to be devoured by wolves. The servants stood up and said it was her fault; her son kept hounds, and *they* killed sheep with impunity. Miceflaus, like David of old, gave sentence against himself, condemning the woman and her son; but when his worthy confessor applied the dreadful story to the state of society in Poland, its brutal Prince ordered him some punishment, from whence a popular commotion saved him: and Miceflaus, deposed afterwards

* These stones were then supposed to have fallen down from *heaven*: and Sir Joseph Banks, even at this day, says there are existing proofs that stones *do* fall. See Mr. King's ingenious publication for conjectures how and where they are generated.

for ordering an ecclesiastick's person into custody, left Casimir the Humble to reign in his stead, who reinstated his predecessor in all things but the throne. So fared it in the north of Europe: and its second crusade, under the Emperor Conrade, in the south, was an unsuccessful one. Two hundred thousand Christians perished in the field, dissention and disease filled their whole camp; while Saladine, a virtuous and martial prince, helped by that treachery which prevailed among his enemies, gained a great victory at Tiberiade, retook Jerusalem, after some weak resistance, subdued Antioch, and contrived so as to annihilate each trace of all the boasted conquests which so many nations had united to acquire. Emanuel, Emperor of the East, had proved false to our common cause, supplied the army with bad provision, and poisoned their water, having adopted his father's mean policy after inheriting his throne. That throne now again empty, was soon filled by young Alexis, twelve years of age only, but already married to Agnes, the French King's daughter, not yet eleven. He had an excellent preceptor, and tender surviving parent, but his father's first cousin, Andronicus, actuated by mad ambition, strangled the queen mother, poisoned the tutor, hashed poor little Alexis in pieces, murdered an innocent sister of that most innocent child, and seizing the virgin widow young Agnes, forcibly married her. This tyranny lasted not long:—Isaac Angelo rebelled; Andronicus caught *his* brothers and put them to cruel tortures; Isaac fled to sanctuary, whence the nobles took and crowned him emperor, putting Andronicus to death. Henry the lion, meantime, husband to our Matilda, son to Frederick, and associated with him in the government, merited his title to the western empire by acts of the most distinguished valour; and from some ruins of old *Lunenburgh*, where the *moon* had been worshipped in pagan days, he built a new town, but did not change its name, though Bardewic, a fortress there, might have afforded one. It was he who, seeing a young Italian in his court bribing the pages, for no good purpose, as he deemed,

cut

cut off his nose, and sent him home so mutilated to the pope. Urban III. prepared to revenge the insult, but hearing at Ferrara of Saladin's successes, he was seized with a sudden shuddering, and died of grief. Our Henry in this pontiff lost an indulgent friend, who had shown him many marks of partiality, and had presented him a crown of peacocks' feathers, interwoven with gold, permitting him to bestow it, with the newly conquered island, on whichsoever of his sons he loved best. The King, reflecting how the other two had openly and in arms fought his life upon the continent, turned his thoughts towards *John*, and found, upon examining *his* pretensions, that young prince's name first on a long list of barons confederated against his person and government at home. The cup was full, and this addition made it run over. In 1190 therefore, died at Saumur Henry II. of England—his corpse attended by one *natural* son, properly so called, the offspring of fair Rosamond. Richard, afterwards surnamed Cœur de Lion, struck with the news, ran to Fontevault in all speed, to see his father; and some blood at that instant issuing from the dead body's mouth and nostrils, a thought struck the youth that he had surely been his father's murderer, and that to expiate such an offence, he must immediately set forward for the Holy Land. Gregory VIII. employed his short pontificate in sharpening *all* princes' resolutions for *that* purpose, and Philip Augustus Deodatus, of France, after having driven Jews, Mimes, and many other descriptions of men whom he deemed heirs to everlasting perdition, away from his kingdom, where he endeavoured at a thorough reformation of manners, took the sacred banner himself, and fell upon the Turks with successful courage.

Venice was however the greatest gainer by these bursts of fury, which desolated Asia and exhausted Europe. The commodities *they* imported and exported were exempt from duties; *their* city was the place of general rendezvous for the crusaders, who appointed them vast possessions in the conquered country, and made the old Morea all their own. It is observable, that while I am writing no trace of what they gained

gained seems left in their now ruined and degraded city, unless the pillars yet stand upon La Riva de' Schiavoni, which were brought from Greece in the twelfth century, when the third fell in the sea. They were called Marco and Teodoro, and I believe *christened* with no small formality. Bonaparte has sent the bronze horses to Paris which once drew Apollo's car, and which escaped the destruction of many curious statues by the Latins, who in their turns acted a gothick part, plundering Constantinople as Rome had been plundered so many centuries before. But all the Italian states were, in the days here submitted to our *Retrospect*, enriched by these expeditions, and improved by them: lettered Pisa tasted the sweets of commerce, Florence felt the reanimating warmth of science, and Viterbo was built, or at least beautified by the popes; whilst Genoa, who seemed to live only on the pleasure of plaguing the Venetians, enjoyed that happiness in full perfection during those contests which impaired the Greek empire, and paved the way for its final capture by the Turks. Berne, in Switzerland, was founded by Bertoldo, and Flensburgh and Riga raised their heads in the north, where the two sons of Boleslaus, Primislaus and Ladislaus, disputed the sovereignty of Bohemia, after Casimere the good bishop of Prague's demise. After some struggles the first of these competitors was lost to Europe, and concluded dead upon the fields of Palestine; where baffled politicians, beaten warriors, and unsuccessful lovers in those days all ran, either to repair or lose the memory of their misfortunes, and many years elapsed before this prince was found. His brother Ladislaus however, feeling in advanced age the natural bent towards fraternal fondness, desired earnestly to see once more that figure which he had loved in childhood as companion of his sports, and feared in youth as candidate for his kingdom. He caused diligent search to be made, and having, in consequence of his daily encreasing anxiety, been disturbed by nightly dreams, in which this figure presented itself perpetually to his fancy, inquisition was strict at home, and requests preferred to every court abroad, for the
purpose

purpose of forwarding inquiry. Assiduous application is seldom fruitless; Primiſlaus was diſcovered at length turning a ſpit in the kitchen of *Philip* the emperor at Ratiſbon. Ladislaus, old and childleſs, ſent for him home *forthwith*, embraced him tenderly, and dying in his arms within a week, confirmed him in the ſucceſſion. And now Philip, aſſiſted by one half the world, conteſted the weſtern empire againſt Otho, ſon to Henry the Lion, while Alexis Angelus in the eaſt had the ſtrange cruelty to blind his brother Iſaac, who had ſaved him from Andronicus's tyranny, for which this worthleſs wretch deſoſed and mutilated, and thruſt him in a convent. We read with delight however, that the earth opened with a ſudden fiſſure and ſwallowed the uſurper as he ſurveyed ſome buildings intended for his palace. The Mamalucchi too, apoſtate Chriſtians, were formed about this time into a body by Saladin, imitating the orders of knights, Teutons, &c. with which the world ſwarmed, and which, to ſay truth, contributed exceedingly towards its civilization. Universities were founded every where, and at Montpelier was conſtructed a college for phyſicians. Their art indeed was deformed by magick, and airy notions of ſympathetick powers, picked up in Arabia, where *gems* were recommended in medicine very ſtrongly, ſometimes for curing, ſometimes for pointing out the pathognomick ſymptoms of diſeaſe, and treatiſes were written in *rhyme* upon ſubjects little ſuſceptible of poetick beauty; but then *wounds*, the conſequence of valour, were admitted to invigorate the deſign, and atrophy, produced by love, was called in to ſoften it. Learning too, aſſiſted not a little the operations of phyſick, if we believe *Æneas Silvius*, afterwards pope, who tells how ſome biſhop was cured of dropſy by reading *Quintus Curtius*, whoſe book they all aſſembled round on eve of ſome great battle, to conſult; opening it caſually, as in old times were uſed the *ſortes Homericæ ut Virgilianæ*. Eufſathius however, biſhop of Theſſalonica, of whom we all hear ſo much in the notes upon Pope's Homer, ſeems to have been an aſtoniſhing ſcholar for his day. Geoffrey, of Monmouth, a contemporary

porary writer, tells how *Homer testifies* that *Brutus*, having ravaged the province of *Aquitaine* with fire and sword, came at last to the *city of Tours*; and Warton says that they considered Virgil as a magician. This may be so; but 'tis possible it might be a sort of compliment, as we say *Shakespear's magick pen*, &c. They hardly *could* think his *Æneid* a work of forcery, sure—but setting limits to long past absurdities is beyond the power of *Retrospection*, which will be better amused by seeing Philip, assisted by his turnspit ally, attacking Otho successfully on every side, till being tolerably certain of his feat, he made him king, not marquis of Bohemia; and Pope Innocent confirmed the gift. They have been kings ever since Primislaus, and the diadem with which he was crowned at Mentz is yet to be seen among the rarities at Vienna.

We must now return to England, where King Richard was never weary of making generous atonement for all his past offences towards a father whom he exceedingly resembled and esteemed, and imitated in expressing penitence, half unrequired, as Henry himself had done in Becket's case. But 'tis consoling to a reader's mind that these rude crimes of semi-barbarous Christians polluted not the soul, as did the studied debaucheries of pagan wickedness. Our prince's disposition, bent backward by aspiring beyond its strength, felt the elastick force, and quick returned to virtue, soon as the chord was cut that held it down; where principle, the germ of excellence, remains unputrefied by mean voluptuousness, the heart will clear itself of other stains, and regain its pristine purity. Queen Elinor was instantly released, and Jews, who often suffered from sudden emotions of the sovereigns they served, were ordered never to appear at court: some rich ones, offering money however, shewed their sneering faces at the coronation; Richard was enraged at their appearance, contrary to his express command, and his expression of displeasure was considered as a signal for massacre. The rabble hunted them from place to place, nor did this phrenzy end in the metropolis: disgraceful barbarities were practised

tised on them in every country, and 500 of them refuging in York castle from the attempts of a licentious mob, set themselves on fire there, like Decebalus of old, and were every one consumed. *More* honourable victories were won over the infidels in Asia: the kings of France and England there, panting for military glory, and warm with the romantick spirit of the times, tore down many a Turkish crescent, and Richard gained his appellation Cœur de Lion. To reward those who fought bravely by his side, the privilege of what is now called *coat armour* was invented. The half moons were bestowed on those who had subdued infidels, wearing that badge of Mahometanism, and gryffons adorned the shields of such as seized a Saracen so called. Our monarch's battle-axe was named *mate gryphon*.

*Bel kynge Richarde I understonde,
Or he went forth from fair Engelhonde,
Let him make an axe for nones,
To brake therewythe the sum Sarafyn's bones.*

The Grecian fire was now used on the Turks' side, and with dreadful effect: it was an inextinguishable naptha on which water had no power. *Beau fire!* exclaimed our sovereign in prayer to Jesus Christ, when he heard the fatal bags burst among his subjects; *beau fire! avertit le feu gregeois!* Against that dreadful weapon, indeed, not even Richard's lion spirit could stand firm; though he amazed both armies with his valour, took the island of Cyprus, and seized a ship (Fuller says) with 250 scorpions on board for purpose of poisoning Christians. A curious prize! but perhaps the scorpions were figurative, and meant Mohammedan instructors—I guess not myself what they were. Certain it is that Askelon was taken, chiefly by our king's personal prowess, which carried the cross once more close to the walls of Jerusalem. There, a sudden stop was put to their career—the crusaders themselves were weary and worn out; a large jar was carried about the field with this inscription—*I came out full, I go home empty.*

The Italians, hasty to enjoy their gains—the Germans, half desirous at length to heal their wounds, patched up a truce for three years, three months, three weeks and three days, a number supposed singularly lucky and fortunate.

Richard indeed, butchered 5000 Saracen prisoners in cold blood, and thereby offended Philip of France, on whose subjects Saladin wreaked instant revenge. Leopold, duke of Austria, had likewise been offended by our martial monarch as they lay before the trenches of Acre, and he meanly exercised his vengeance upon an undefended pilgrim, for 'twas in that disguise that Cœur de Lion travelled home through his dominions, not trusting to the honour of Deodatus. At Vienna however, he was seized and put in prison, while his two enemies leaguings with ever-treacherous John, his youngest brother, invaded the Roman domain. Queen Eleanor wrote to Pope Celestine, lamenting loudly the indignities her son sustained in his captivity; but her activity in raising money to pay down that ransom which she carried to the continent herself, was far more efficacious than any correspondence held with Rome, which looked very quietly on, whilst Philip, and his worthless associates were laying snares for the perpetual detention of so troublesome a neighbour. By a happy combination of chance and dexterity, Richard escaped; and a letter from the king of France to John, has these words:—"Take care of yourself, for the devil is broken loose." His correspondent profited, but not in the way he wished, by this advice; for being at Evreux, he invited the French princes and officers who thought him firm in friendship with their sovereign, to a great dinner, and massacred them sitting round his own table; then seizing the citadel, put every Frenchman in it to the sword; and running next to meet his brother, threw himself at his feet.

Cœur de Lion abhorred such mean and cowardly behaviour, yet pardoned all at intercession of their mother, a lady, whose maternal affection seems to have been ever liberally and impartially divided among her children, although insensible to all ties of conjugal tenderness,

ness, and equally a scourge to the amiable husband of her youth, and the unconstrained choice of her maturer years. Duke Leopold meanwhile crushed his leg in a tournament, and the fever consequent on such an accident produced reflexion, and of course remorse. He ordered the English hostages to be released, and his surrounding ecclesiasticks forced the successor to comply with the dictates of a death-bed repentance—he did still more; he forgave the yet remaining sum which was to have been paid for Richard's ransom, and they agreed to fall on Philip of France with newly-revived violence. Fresh sieges, battles, blows, distain the page of history, and make us avert the glance of *Retrospection*.

Dieu et mon droit, was first used as a motto by Richard in one of these victories, where a warlike bishop of Beauvais, named *Dreux*, whence our English *Drax* derives his pedigree; advanced towards the front where our bold monarch mowed down whole ranks as usual with his sword; he was related to Augustus, therefore found no mercy: the rough king seized him as he flipt, staggering on the bloody green-sword, and threw him into prison where he died. Pope Celestine demanded the liberation of his son, but Richard recollecting the coldness shewn by Rome when *his own* freedom was solicited, savagely sent the stained armour *thither*, with the relentless words employed by Joseph's no less cruel brethren. "This have we found; know thou, "and see whether it be thy son's coat or no?" This anecdote however, proves that the scriptures were known to prince and pope at least, and there was a Lombard doctor in the same century, called *Peter Comestor*, because such was his knowledge of every chapter and every text, that it seemed, they said, as if he had eaten the whole Bible, and William of Sicily made Gualterius Anglicus archbishop of Palermo, only because he had taught *him* to make Latin verses; while John of Salisbury here in England versified, rather than translated into our rough language, the famous apologue of The Belly and the Members. All ecclesiasticks therefore were not warriors, though Dreux

was one : but in the year 1176, the pope's legate did obtain a grant, that clergy in this island needed not be *compelled* to single combat for a lady's reputation : those who took advantage of the grant, were notwithstanding, very meanly thought of.

The world was all romance, and love, and valour ; our martial sovereign made as fine poetry in praise of beauty, as anie minstrel or troubadour, says Savarie de Maelon, unless perhaps Faydit. Faydit indeed was highly famed in story : Dante has placed him in his paradiso, and Petrarch tells us, that his tuneful tongue was more than shield and helmet, sword or spear. *He* prevailed on a professed nun of Provence to quit her convent and follow him as glee-maid through the world on foot for twenty years of her life. *He* only was found worthy to make the *chant funebre* of *Rudelle*, the noble bard itinerant, who died for love of the *Comtesse de Tripoli*, having become enamoured from mere warmth of imagination only, and written the passionate and beautiful song of *Du Luench*, or *so far away*. Having walked from Picardy into Africa for the sake of viewing the object of his bright and faithful flame, he arrived there feeble and emaciated ; but on beholding the countess, clasped his hands in thankfulness and expired ; his last words, like those of general Wolfe, were, " I die satisfied." To shew her sensibility of such merit, his lady placed his reliques in a porphyry vase, gilt the words of his so famous sonnet with gold, borrowed King Richard's Faydit to sing his requiem, and then shut herself up for ever in a cloister. Some such adventures, but not so well authenticated as the story told by Beauchamps, befell our royal minstrel in the isle of Cyprus, whence he brought a large chest of martyrs' bones—*si tamen martyrum*,* as St. Augustine said of such another prize, ages before : and whence he brought some gems *excellent for foreknowledge*. 'Twas an Arabian superstition, originating probably from the *Urim and Thummin*, two stones in Aaron's breast plate. Hawkesworth has made elegant use of the idea, where Sultan Amurath's ring is represented to blush or fade according to the emotions of its wearer's conscience.

While

* If indeed martyrs they were.

While Genoa, Venice, Pisa, therefore enriched their towns and polished their manners in consequence of these crusades, William the Lion of Scotland, and Richard Cœur de Lion of England, came home together loaded only with laurels, and David, William's brother, not only accompanied them to Syria, Surrye, as 'twas then called; but had as many adventures to boast, as any warrior of them all when he returned: having been taken by the Egyptians, rescued by the Venetians, and brought to Scotland from Constantinople by an English or Hamburgh merchant.

These events, with the death of brave Richard and greater Saladine shall close this chapter, as they happened just in time to wind up the 1200 years we have reviewed since Christ's resurrection, and Christian princes might well learn humility from that virtuous and noble-minded Saracen, when by his last command they saw a winding-sheet borne before his dead corpse carried to interment, and heard his herald with impressive voice proclaim, "This shirt alone, after all his victories, could Saladine take with him to the grave."

STANZAS DULUENCH.

Irat et dolent piez en partray,
S'yeu nonvey est amour luench,
E non say q'uouras la veyray,
Carson nostras turras luench.

Dieu que fez tou, quant ven e vray,
El forma est amour luench,
My don poder al cor que hay,
Esper vezer amour du luench.

Segnour tener mes perils vray,
L'amour qu'ay vers aila de luench,
Car per un ben my oril verog
Hai mils mals tan foy de luench.

IMITATION.

I.

How will these vagrant feet be worne,
That seek so wide from home to stray,
Ere by their force I can be borne,
To find my love so far away.

II.

How often will my panting heart,
Request from heav'n a smiling ray
Of hope, which heav'n can best impart,
To cheer me while so far away.

III.

How will these eyes before whose sight
Dangers their various forms display;
Bear with th' excess of beauty bright,
Beaming from hers so far away.

IV.

Ja d'otr' amour non j'auzivray,
S'wray je veu le amour de luench,
Qui nay plu bella brileray
En luec que fia près ni luench.

Unrivall'd excellence ! to shine,
Be yours thro' many a distant day,
To follow and adore be mine,
Till found my love so far away.

C H A P. XVII.

FROM THE YEAR 1200, TO 1230.

THE opening of the thirteenth century found the world recovered from that general panick which was supposed immediately to precede her dissolution. It might perhaps occur to some of those who searched the Scriptures, that neither at evening, nor at night, nor at cock-crowing,* nor in the morning was the hour appointed. The evening was past, and night came gradually on, ending in utter darkness during the gothick ages. Robertson points out the moment of deepest obscuration, which returned, he says, with redoubled gloom after Alfred and Charlemagne had shown the dawn at distance. The crusading times might be, I think, considered as the moment of cock-crowing, from which hour light made her gradual though slow advances towards that morning which seems to me ended with the eighteenth century.

This light broke from *the east*: the Latin writers lost in wonder at the superior glories of Constantinople, make use of exclamation to express their sense of surprize, and hardly can drop into cold narrative of matters which amazed them. Benjamin the Jew, and Gonthier the monk, say my readers, might be easily dazzled and amazed by sight, or even hearing of the golden tree filled with mechanick singing birds, coloured with precious stones after nature, which was said to adorn the Greek emperor's palace; while lions formed of the same precious metal, (there so near its birth-place) roared by inventive luxurious artifice at

* Fuller in his Life of Hildegardis, calls the twelfth century cock-crowing time. I know not why, but his manner of understanding the passage was distinct from mine.

foot of his splendid throne. True; but *l'Histoire de la Conquête par Geoffroy de Villehardouin*, one of the highest noblemen in France, and accustomed to all the magnificence which our western hemisphere could show; bears testimony to that admiration which even Frenchmen felt, and Italians hastened to prove, by carrying thence to their own country, those arts of life which had in all ages found the soil of Florence and of Rome propitious. Innocent III. encouraged excellence in others, and in himself united various qualities which cannot without difficulty inhabit the same heart: but such was his peculiar care for justice, that by frequent recitation he learned to repeat over the pretensions of contending claimants, that he might be enabled to judge with perfect equity between them. The times were indeed past when persons aggrieved, ran to the sovereign's or pontiff's palace, and with loud outcries forced him to hear and to redress; men now decided every thing by the sword: which Innocent the III^d. lamented, and endeavoured to render unnecessary by hearing and getting every one's story by memory: yet was it no easy matter to adjust affairs between debtor and creditor, which last had no power of touching the horses, arms or hawks of a gentleman equal with himself; and as for artizans or traders, they came not within idea of receiving justice: and when we read of charters, immunities and franchises, we must annex no other notion to the words, than merely manumission from actual slavery. Under Frederick Barbarossa indeed, Otho Frisingensis complains that there began to grow up *free cities in Italy*, that affected to be governed by their own magistrates; but in a century more, the emperors seeing some great lords living among these burghesses, and swearing now and then to protect them with their swords, began to form palaces for themselves at the gates, with intent to awe the inhabitants and hold them in due subjection. The free cities however, would be slaves no more: after a thousand contests, they shook off all sovereignty except what they created for themselves, and at last ended in independent, though petty republics.

Italy

Italy, with much addition to her wisdom, made much increase to her wealth. Companies of merchants and traders from Lombardy, settled in various nations; a bank had been some time erected at Venice; plants of the sugar cane had been brought from Asia, and cultivated in Sicily, whence they were carried to Spain, where we shall leave them till the *woody* islands, thence called by Spaniards Madera, by Portuguese *Madeiras*, were discovered: but Roger I. carried off many artificers in the silk trade from the crusades to Palermo; and while *they* were at work to *adorn* our western world, the Italians, trading in money, were diligent to *corrupt* it; exacting twenty per cent. interest at the lowest, and some times thirty in France and England, where people had little notion of punishing such crimes except by excommunication, for the criminals were too mean to be called out for duel. Foreigners indeed devoured England quite at their pleasure, and our commerce was yet at a low ebb; no treaty of that nature appearing, till one was made with Hacquin king in Norway, about 1215. London, roofed with thatch, and containing only 40,000 inhabitants, as Peter de Blois asserts, who lived there long, could scarce deserve Fitzstephen's pompous description of it I think, while chimneys were unknown even to houses where the baron drank from out his silver cups. Day was however beginning to break even in the north: the coast of Schonen was observed to swarm with herrings; and Arnold de Lubec thanks God very properly for that discovery, which, as he said, fed the southern nations of Europe, and clothed the northern ones with manufactures—not with skins as formerly. Literature kept pace in advancement; and whereas a book had till near the year 1200 been esteemed a commutation for sin, if bequeathed to a church library, where many had been presented *pro remedio animæ suæ*, in order to obtain peace for the soul of him who gave it: the countess of Anjou paid 200 sheep, 5 quarters of wheat only, and 5 quarters of rye and millet for some sermons written by the bishop of Halberstadt; and paper being grown of common use, people were no longer obliged to scratch out Livy's Decades in order to copy

over on the same parchment the legend of Cecilia perhaps, or the romance of Sir Alifandre. Innocent III. was himself a scholar, and wrote a *Treatise de Contemptu Mundi*, beside the *Stabat Mater*, which is not even yet forgotten; the Spanish Saracens, and even Jews, contributed to dig up the germ of philosophy, the seed of which was after so well diffused; and Martinus Scotus lent his assistance in the useful work of translating; and although private wars, carried on with rancorous hatred between private families in every nation, still subsisted, and quarrels of individuals were decided by single combat, *some* law was known, and *some* was accepted, and men did not in this century, as in the preceding one, when two grandsons disputed succession in a barony against their uncles, brothers to the deceased, look with perplexity on a case so intricate, and resolve that the gordian knot, which none could untie, should at length be cut; when choosing two champions, one for the uncles, the other for the grandsons, their relations set them out armed cap-a-pee, to settle it with their lives. Happily the right heirs' combatant succeeded, and brothers of a dead baron contended for his estate no more against the immediate descendants of his person. Riga and Flensburg had in the last century rear'd up their rough heads; the first stone of this last named city was laid by Waldemar, grandfather to Margaret, known afterwards to history by name of the Semiramis of the north: and universities starting up daily in various countries, shewed that war alone was not completely and positively, in the days we are reviewing, the sole concern of man.

Our own country's situation, brought nearer to *Retrospection's* eye by the approximating powers of Shakespear, makes one feel as if less far removed from learning's restoration than we really were in the days of King John, under whose reign flourish'd Bishop Grossthead, a man whose rugged manners, and cruel punishment of light carriages or refractory nuns, was well counterbalanced by deep and wide erudition, and by his commendable spirit of battling in favour of the English clergy against foreigners, for which he was very near incurring sentence of excommunication: although 'tis now supposed that the cause of general

neral literature was in such times rather promoted than impeded by rendering our island a sort of mart for distant professors, and encouraging that commerce in every branch of knowledge which importation naturally tends to produce. Yet Fleury, candid, elegant and amiable Fleury, whose piety emanates in gentleness, whose scholarship, a comment upon common sense, never yet overlaid one grain of it with learned lumber; laments the ill success and danger of a prelate, who in this early dawn of future day dared cry aloud against papal usurpations; in consequence of which, most of our rich benefices were occupied by Italians, notwithstanding the vigorous efforts of our own people, who now gave much of their time to study. Aristotle's ethicks, and I believe politicks had worked their way through Arabick versions from the east to England, and were at the time we speak of, translating into Latin: yet my readers must not suppose *all* the clergy could write and read that language familiarly: they were for the most part of a different cast; an old entry shows how an archdeacon of Richemont, in Yorkshire, came to Bridlington priory with ninety-six fine horses, twenty-one dogs, and three hawks—a *faire establissement* is the expression—he had also one *large book, unborrowed*: yet Velley says that cantadours and musars, violars and tale-tellers, were beyond all enumeration in these days. Thibaut, king of Navarre, composed and set the pretty verses preserved by Dr. Burney, and translated *totidem syllabis*, containing his adventure with a country girl, which I have heard an old Frenchman, native of le Gevaudan, sing to the tune printed in Burney's History of Musick. He was in love with Queen Blanche, as I remember, although 'tis plain he could not boast a rigid constancy like that of Rudelle. The kings of France and England set bad examples of conjugal deportment; and Innocent III. himself a Frenchman, descended from Lothaire, endeavoured a long time, with fruitless pains, to reconcile Philip Augustus with his consort Ingelburgha, whom he kept confined in her own private palace, whilst he lived publicly with Mary, daughter to the Duke of Bohemia, who usurped regal honours, and behaved as if actually queen. The Pope however,

finding no remonstrance, or even censure, had the least effect upon their manners, laid (as he had threatened) their whole land under an interdict, forbidding all ecclesiastical functions for six months, except baptism of infants, and absolution of penitents at point of death. Every church was hung with black, and the same colour cover'd all devotional pillars in the street: the crucifixes and images were laid on the floors, and a fable pall thrown over them. No preaching heard, no prayers read, no psalms sung, no sacrament administer'd, no procession permitted, no holiday kept. The people were shocked, were terrified; and flocked in frightened crowds about the palace, demanding their sovereign lady's restoration, and the dismissal of adulterous Mary. While such incidents are objects of *Retrospect* alone, readers will pause perhaps, and wonder why—but in the thirteenth century business and pleasure both depended on devotion. Those artificers who were not kept in some great baron's castle to work for *him*, derived their subsistence chiefly by labouring for the decoration of ecclesiastical dignity; all such were starving for employment therefore, a circumstance which might affect even an English bosom: while those who relied on festive shows for their amusement, sat pining and nerveless, and found no means of passing away the time, a case that should excite compassion in my female readers, for ladies loved diversion then as now, and were detained from it by the unpleasing carefulness of mothers. A Northfolke dame's counsille to hyr childe, written not long after, advises her thus:

And goe notte to the wrestlinge or shootinge of the coc,
 An as it werre a madde wenche or a giglotte;
 And lough notte to scorne nodir olde, nodir yong,
 But be of good beryng, and have a good tonge,

were injunctions as it appears ever needful in England, where to satyrize their companions seemed always to constitute much of the women's pleasure in public places. A papal interdict was in short, such a calamity as no nation would long endure, and Philip felt himself forced by it to recal Ingelburgha, and drive the beautiful supplanter from

from his *arms*, however he might retain her in his *affections*. Certain it is, he never received the patient queen to personal favour or even *endurance*, till news was brought him that Bohemian Mary had accepted another lover. The French nation meanwhile, partial to Danish blood, would not receive the king's son by that lady, as heir to their crown. He was made Earl of Boulogne, and his sister, first affianced to our young Prince Arthur, was after his death, Duchess of Lorraine; during which time Lewis, sole child of Ingelburgha, was solemnly recognized Dauphin of France, and compensated his father's unkindness by every mark of filial affection to the Princess of Denmark, whose nature was softer than her name. The same year Innocent had the satisfaction of seeing Bulgaria and Wallachia, long under the patriarchal see of Constantinople, united to Rome; if submission may be termed a union. He sent his legate to reward their leader, Calo Johannes,* with a diadem which *I saw* among the imperial treasures in 1786, adding permission for the new monarch to coin money, as a privilege obtained from papal authority, which had *till then* quietly looked on and seen every petty prince throughout Europe exerting that power as a prerogative inherent in the dignity they assumed. And now Peter of Arragon, inspired with like sentiments of reverence for the mistress of mankind, earnestly, though spontaneously, requested leave to wait upon his Holiness, and receive from his hand the sacred ceremony of coronation at the capital. The Pope, for some reason however, chose to perform this function at San Pancrazio monastery, where the youth swore faith and obedience to his *superior lord*, and promised to persecute all such as *he* deemed hereticks with rigour. This was an unlucky oath for the Albigenes; a dreadful crusade was set on foot against those Protestants, who, because they would not acknowledge that supremacy which they were unable to resist, were soon considered as infidels, and ranked with Jews, Turks, every denomination of men most obnoxious to Christianity. The Comté de Thoulouse, where they

* *Calo Johannes* means Johannes or John the beautiful, like Philip le *Bel*, &c.

chiefly resided, became a scene of blood and slaughter. Numbers of harmless believers in our Lord were murdered, mangled, and thrown unburied to the dogs; while the red banner of that bloody cross first carried forth to redeem our Saviour's sepulchre from his profess'd foes, was on this cruel occasion unfurled for the destruction of men, who died crying to him for mercy, and who had lived in peaceable obedience of his gentle precepts. Raymond* requested the Pope for very pity, to forbear this desolation of *his* small domain, protesting his own allegiance to the Romish see, and his approaching ruin consequent on this crusade. For having thus remonstrated, the Count was, by a nuncio from Innocent III. required to do public penance: it was alleged that some monk had been killed by some of his subjects, and no atonement made; Raymond swore on the *corpus Domini* his ignorance of any such event: no matter—the legate saw him stript from head to foot, and scourged upon his naked back nine times round the pretended martyr's grave. Not yet contented—on his unhealed wounds was buckled armour, in which he was condemned to follow the crusade himself, before he could obtain absolution, which arrived not 'ere he had wept the fate of Bezieres, a new built town in his dominions, which, though divided between catholicks and these imprudent sectaries, was set on fire, and, with its inhabitants, completely burned to the ground.

Peter II. of Arragon meanwhile incurred the Pope's censure for immorality, although to his religion nothing could be objected. He, like Deodatus, took an ill-placed aversion to his consort; but Spain was saved from punishment for *her* sovereign's folly, by one of those uncommon occurrences which keep the writers of dramattick works in countenance, by showing that among the combinations of this world scarce any event is impossible. Peter, young, amiable, and valiant,

* This Raymond (so called by Pietro della Valle) is named Sigismund by Raynal in his account of Tholouse—the story is the same. Bezieres is 5 miles from Narbonne, 157 from Paris.

seduced a lady of the court who had been kindly treated by the queen on some occasion, and was supposed to resemble her in person. She feigned to accept his Majesty's addresses, but told her mistress of his falsehood, proving her own truth and gratitude: they plotted a scheme like that in two of Shakespear's comedies, then less improbable than now perhaps; and like fair Helen in *All's Well that ends Well*, the long-deserted queen proved pregnant: Peter accused her, and she called a champion—when he had disarmed his antagonist, and was on the point of taking his life, the *lady* rushed from her seat between their swords, swore to her own purity *upon them*, and revealing the whole mystery, Alphonso II. son to this stolen though lawful embrace, was born; and made himself renowned in war and wisdom. Here was an extraordinary tale for those who related sad or merry stories; and I doubt not but from the minstrels, troubadours, &c. much anecdote for history as well as drama has been collected. In the account given by Bonfinius, and the Hungarian chronicles, of what past *there* in the early part or period of this century, may be traced Lillo's impressive tragedy, called *Elmeric*. He was no better scholar than myself, and never sought for tales of classic woe; nor needed, while the adventures of Gertrude, wife to King Andrew, remained credible, and even generally believed.

Her husband resolving on a warlike journey to Palestine, felt desirous to leave his dominions in care of Count Peter, a character of rigid and untainted excellence, who promised to maintain the laws of chivalry, and support the administration of justice so far as it was there understood. Protection was even claimed by the queen herself, who submitted to receive it from the regent rather than accompany her consort to the Holy Land, as ladies for the most part were accustomed to do. Her motive was little suspected: she secretly hated Andrew and adored the husband of her cousin, who was united with Peter by every tie of duty and affection: such love was then considered as incestuous. Yet when the king was at a convenient distance she made her mad proposals to his substitute; and on his steady and severe refusal

fusal vowed vengeance on the wife whom he preferred to her, and set her brother on to shake that lady's allegiance. The regent learned the truth: the brother fled to a monastery confessing his impious intent, and rejoicing at his deliverance from the guilt. Count Peter then relating all to the wise bishop of Strigonia, received from him the half expressed permission to dispatch Gertrude by assassination. It was a short sentence, written without stop or point—*Reginam occidere nolite timere bonum est*.* I have somewhere read this very thing related of our Edward second's murder, but Hungary lays claim to the original device. The Venetians and Genoese about this time were quarrelling for the island of Candia; but 'spite of petty wars 'mongst one another all Italy was growing rich, and Rome was once more arrived at its maturity of power. Jortin, in his coarse way, says papal impudence was at its height in 1228; an inquisition had been established in France in 1227; and in 1229 the Scriptures were prohibited in vulgar tongue. A psalter and breviary were by the council of Tholouse permitted to laymen, but he who had a Hebrew Bible in possession ran risk of being suspected for a Jew, and tortured as such by this new inquisitorial court. Cardinals were now made with the new brevet, *Creamus te socium regibus, superiorem ducibus et fratrem nostrum*—we create thee a companion for kings, a superior to dukes, and brother to *ourselves*—and if a cardinal was accused of any fault, no fewer than twenty-four ocular witnesses were necessary to his condemnation. The good popes were diligent to crush incipient error as they deemed it, and persecuted Protestants as their predecessors the emperors, particularly the good ones, had in past days persecuted Christianity: but trampling camomile only makes it grow. Innocent was really an exemplary pontiff, and his domestick gentleness more than equalled his publick severity; though Almeric was deposed, as it appears, from reigning in Cyprus, merely by his caprice, who chose to set up Jean de Brenne as sovereign there. *He*

* By placing a comma, or rather semicolon at *timere*; these words contain command to kill the queen—'tis a good deed, *bonum est*. If you put the stop at *nolite*, 'tis a direct prohibition; and *timere bonum est*—'tis good to be cautious.

married the daughter of the Marquis de Montferrat by the Pope's command, and was crowned at Ptolemais; while Isaac the eastern emperor broke his heart, and Ducas battled it a short moment against all his foes, till the Venetians threatening dreadful revenge for the death of their *protégé* young Alexius, Ducas attempted flight, but was brought back, I think, and thrown from a high tower; after which Lascaris, a name dear to literature, was invested with the purple. His efforts to defend his dignity from Christian enemies were ineffectual; Venice covered the sea with ships, and having stormed Constantinople gave it up to plunder. Baldwin earl of Flanders reigned in the east a while, and that divided throne now saw its end approaching. The Latins, as our European troops were called, controuled every election, and the Greek empire, dwindled almost to nothing, made to every fresh attack a more feeble and wretched resistance. Morosini constituted patriarch, shared a large portion of imperial power; and Innocent III. saw with no approbation the crusaders thus turning those arms meant to extirpate Saracens, against catholic Christians, more tractable and obedient than themselves. The Venetians too had torn a miraculous image of our Lady from the famed temple of Santa Sophia, and had sent it to adorn St. Mark's church in their own city: *a rash step!* because that image had brought victory with it wherever it was carried, and had appeared upon the field of battle on every trying occasion since A. D. 973. So here's a second seizure of the palladium; a new proof that nothing new can be either done or found, read or related; nothing new but as the moon is new, I mean the old moon with her face t'other way. 'Twas near this same eventful period that Philip and Otho disputed the possession of our western empire with no small degree of fury, till Innocent III. good-naturedly accommodated all their differences, by granting a dispensation for the marriage of Philip's daughter with the bold duke of Saxony, his rough competitor; although many and serious were the Pope's scruples, for they were *fourth* cousins. A more terrifying calamity followed the match however, than

what could have arisen from mingling blood so distant. Another Otho, palatine of Witelspach, to whom the princess had before been promised, waylaid her father, and revengefully murdered him as he walked undefended through the streets in procession, without any other benefit accruing from his treachery than that of gratifying a vindictive spirit; her husband being instantly, by papal decree, acknowledged as sovereign in Germany and king in Italy, in which character Otho was crowned by Archbishop Hubert at Milan with the *iron* crown, according to ancient usage, and I believe it still remains there to this day; a proof of the Prophet Daniel's heavenly inspiration.

But our *retrospective* eye has been too long detained from England, where selfish and usurping John obtained on Cœur de Lion's death that throne which ought to have been filled by their own brother's son, young Arthur Duc de Bretagne, whose short appearance on the stage of life shewed him well calculated to have acted a longer part on it. I know not why Shakespear represents him of so tender and flexible a temper, unless to excite compassion for his fate and for his hapless mother's, Lady Constance. Hume draws the portrait of a martial youth, who half provoked his own assassination by warm expressions of unyielding spirit; whilst the vile uncle, *and mean deserter of his brother's blood*, after having vainly sought a hand that would dispatch him, *used his own*. To murder he likewise added insolent self-gratification; repudiating his queen, he had already married Isabella affianced wife to the Earl of March, as soon as the crown was warm upon his head: nor did that nobleman, joining with Arthur's party in revenge, fright or turn *him* from an assault upon the lady of Eustace de Vesey, a bold baron, who first excited his fellows to rebellion, while Constance, mother to the murdered prince, and widow of saucy Geoffrey that despised King Henry, related to Philip of France how her false brother-in-law sent his own barge by night for the young boy, feigning intentions to treat with him; how at that dismal moment he had overpowered his weak years with brutal strength, mangled the body with
repeated.

repeated blows, and thrown it into Seine. The King of France, as his *superior lord* in that country, summoned, tried, and proclaimed John guilty both of felony and parricide, endeavouring to detach his dominions from submission to England, however that submission might be modified.

Against this enemy our worthless sovereign applied to Rome for help, offering the meanest submissions; nor was Pope Innocent a moralist so sturdy as to forbear accepting any terms which might increase the papal power in England. He then who we have seen lay France under an interdict for the ill usage of Ingelburgha daughter to Canute the fourth, contented himself with sending four mysterious rings to John; a sapphire, representing faith he said; a ruby, expressive of general charity; a topaz, whose splendour might impress on the king's mind the beauty of good works; and an emerald, the verdure of which was considered as an emblem of hope. Their number too, he bid him observe, contained a symbol of four cardinal virtues, and the gold they were set in signified the immutability of truth.

Of all these good qualities John possessed so few however, that when in want of money for his vices he pawned the gems, sent knights to make forcible entry on some monasteries, dislodged the *religieux* with violence, and seized their property, threatening to burn the convent if resisted. This outrage provoked the pontiff, and most justly. Our land was now laid under an interdict, and the dead were refused burial in consecrated ground. Lamentation pervaded every place, complaints against King John filled every ear. The prelates prostrate before him requested his submission to the Holy See; and one of them protesting he could not officiate in a realm of which the prince lay under an anathema, found himself, as he returned home, suddenly crush'd under a leaden cope constructed by the tyrant's command to kill an innocent and praise-worthy servant of God for having done his duty. The Pope now set his subjects free from their allegiance, and put our island up to auction. John drove forward, and called his ba-

rons to assist his cause. They, as he might have been assured, complied not. He had dishonoured their families by licentious amours; he had endeavoured to restrain them in their favourite amusement, *hunting*; he had demanded hostages for their allegiance, and seized upon one contumacious lady who had refused to trust him with her son, heir to immense estates, which John confiscated, starving the youth and widowed mother in a prison, the Barons de Braouze.

Philip of France meantime, newly reconciled to Rome, prepared with what was then called paternal consent, and under papal auspices, to invade this seemingly devoted country; and not one baron roused in its defence, though seventeen hundred vessels covered our channel, and manifested sincere intentions of immediate descent. Our worthless monarch now having long insulted that power which none dared oppose, and even half opposed what he was unable to subdue, caught the alarm; and spiritless in war as tyrannical in peace, began to deprecate the clergy's vengeance. Thus after having imprisoned all their concubines, forcing them to pay enormous sums for their release, with twenty tricks meant for the plunder of a body of men he detested; the time was at length arrived that he saw his very existence depending on their fidelity, which, with a stiffness of intellect peculiar to himself, he told them he expected at their hands. The clergy laughed at him; the barons stood immovable, but silent. Urged by Pandolpho, legate from all-conquering Rome, the tide of ruin rolled along, and sure destruction followed.

By the most ignominious ceremony John suddenly resolved to avert it. Under an agony of present terror, he without scruple or objection publicly resigned all his dominions, and by a solemn act gave them to Pope Innocent, *desiring* rather than *consenting* to hold them in future as mere feudatories of the apostolic chair; and stipulating, that should he or any of his successors revoke what he not unjustly termed a voluntary grant and charter, all claim to those dominions should be forfeited.

This

This melancholy function once performed, the *quondam* king continuing on his knees, presented a purse containing all his ill-gotten wealth as part of immediate tribute. This the proud nuncio trampled under feet, but stopt the progress of the French invasion; shewing the whole subject world at once the vast extent of sacerdotal power. Philip then, his prey thus pulled out of his mouth, churned at home his venomous ambition; and John, relieved from panic fears, sent to his favourite admiral the Earl of Salisbury, who was a bastard son of Cœur de Lion, and told him he was at liberty now to fight the French invaders if he would. Richard's brave progeny desired no more; he followed and attacked them in their very harbours; burned and destroyed three hundred sail one day of ships or transports, or whatever name the vessels of those times were known by: but the marine of Philip was destroyed. The exiled prelates next, led on by Langton, made up their quarrel with the tributary tyrant, who, to prove how well he had deserved every mortification that man can receive, dragged a poor wretch to death at his horses' tail, for having predicted the loss of England's crown to the wearer, two years before it was laid at the pope's feet.

'Twas soon to be endangered from a cause which, although dormant during the greater dispute's continuance, revived with vigour soon as that was ended. Eustace de Vesey inflamed all the barons, and formed a powerful confederacy against the king; of whose behaviour complaints were carried to Rome by a large deputation, of which he was head.

Innocent wrote letters to his degenerate *protégé*, and charged him mend his manners; but in vain. Submission may be extorted from a coward, but virtue cannot be hoped for where honour lies *effete*. Langton lent his aid, and shewed the charter obtained by Henry I. War was soon levied; and John had recourse to a banditti named Brabançons, which in those lawless days had no small power. The barons however continued to resist, and conquest followed their pertinacious efforts. The dominion which John had exercised so cruelly, all
Europe

Europe was rejoiced to see curtailed; and the indecent fury he expressed increased the nobles' joy to find him humbled; while the leading articles of their demands only transferred to *them* a king's authority, without much benefit to England as a nation, or to the inhabitants of it as a mass. To colour their opposition however, other clauses were inserted; and to say truth, relieving the peasantry from *royal* oppression was a large step towards securing them from any oppression at all; as people will not be very long in learning, when once protected from the lion's paw, that they are at worst too good to be devoured by the wolf. At Runnymede then the king and barons met for conference, as it was called, but ended in submission of our irresolute sovereign, who on that spot swore positively to render them co-ordinate with himself, and equal certainly, if not superior, in every exercise of the executive power. All men were now bound, in pain of confiscation, to swear allegiance to their new lords; but the freeholders were in every county to choose twelve individuals for report of grievances felt by the subject; and from this embryo atom (such it was when *Magna Charta* was first signed and sealed) grew up within its egg to full maturity the animated aggregate since known to all the world, a British *House of Commons*.

Itinerant judges had long gone a kind of circuit to the distant provinces once in three or four years; but a vast number of what we should at this time deem dreadful crimes, laughed at all laws, and sought decision only by the sword. And it was, I think, after John's degradation, that the realm looked on quietly enough, when requiring an exorbitant sum of money from a rich unoffending Jew, the tyrant forced him to lose a tooth every day till the cash was paid. It was with greater provocation, though with no less injustice, that our vindictive monarch, flattered by his Brabançons, made himself suddenly master of Rochester, and letting loose these ravening and barbarous mercenaries upon the too confiding lords, laid their lands waste from Dover to Berwick, whence many refuged with the unhappy king of Scots, Alexander, who had married John of England's daughter, who re-built
Perth,

Perth, a Saxon town till then, and named from Bertha; and who had the singular misfortune to lose a young child, that perished with his nurse in a great inundation of the Tay. Our sovereign however burning with revenge, which seemed, like the Greek fire, wholly inextinguishable, carried on his internal war with so good prospect of success, that the barons sent to request help from Philip of France, who was once more tempted to invade us. He sent the dauphin over with troops; but our old English families looked upon Louis with a jealous eye; and having heard that he had from his father secret orders to extirpate them all, they turned their thoughts to seeking better terms from treacherous John, whose death happening just at the moment of decision, relieved both parties from anxiety, and confirmed his infant son and successor in the throne. Innocent III. died about the same time. Those two princes began and ended their reigns together; and surely two characters more completely opposite never met upon the page of history. Violent, yet servile, one gave or threw unthank'd away his just prerogatives; the other, gentle, yet firm and resolute, increased the power confided to his charge till it was really swelled nearly to bursting. His last illness was occasioned by his kind haste to reconcile the Pisans with the Genoese; so that one died from raging hurry to destroy, the other from desire to prevent destruction. But it will interest a modern *Retrospector* more to observe this pontiff instituting, from zeal towards religion in France, the order of *jacobin* friars, appointing for their use those very convents which have within these last ten years been made the resort of atheism and nurse of anarchy.

But Poland deserves not to be quite forgotten, although the prince who ruled there was chiefly remarkable, *eminent* we must not say, for his diminutive stature: an unconquerable intrepidity in war proved however, that heroism has little to do with size. Ladislaus Lasconigus was a creature resembling Count Borolowki,* I believe; and 'tis

* A famous dwarf, exhibited in England towards the end of the eighteenth century.

observable that almost all the dwarfs were of their country, when, as some of our old writers lament, men disproportionately small were sought for to serve as pages to great ladies, and men disproportionately large were chosen as porters to great lords, so that honest fellows of a common height lacked masters. When sovereigns indeed chanced thus to be curtailed of human nature's regular pretensions, they were obliged to vindicate their claims by valour; and Charlemagne had always delighted himself to relate, how when his father Pepin the Short was crowned, they let loose a lion to seize a bull for diversion of the French court: "And now," exclaims the king, "who will take that beast off the bull?" Nobody stirred; but their young monarch leap'd himself into the arena, and with his sword stabbed the unsuspecting lion to the heart, releasing the scarce less enraged victim to his fury. *Ocnques foi dign!* was the royal exclamation, while applause and admiration filled the whole assembly. And the fine statue representing this event was, in the reign of Robespierre, flung under heaps of rubbish, Mercier says, and broken in those paroxysms of rage against every king alive or dead, which distinguished Frenchmen in 1794.

But we return to Poland, which was in the thirteenth century scarcely as much civilized as France was in the eighth; and though Lasconigus fought no lions, he made head against innumerable foes, and came off conqueror in fourteen engagements. Poetry did not prosper in the north like personal bravery. Warton gives to the reign of Henry III., I think, our first love song in England: it is a very cold one, and its burthen "Blou, blou, blou northerne wynde, blou, "blou, blou," is savage enough. Thiboult de Navarre and Rudelle were before hand with us; and if King Richard wrote gay verses, it was because had he kept gay company and lived among the crusaders. Wit wants more fire to warm it than does learning or courage: they are of every climate. But Louis IX. of France, son to the dauphin who invaded England, collected in his character a constellation of excellence, not to be comprized in what remains of this chapter, which

fees

sees the great church at Toledo built and decorated by the successor of Sanctius the Idle, Ferdinand IV. by name, who drove the Moors from Andalusia, united the kingdoms of Castile and Leon, and was related to the dowager queen of France, widow to Louis VIII., he who is said to have been son to an admirable father, and father to an incomparable son. The siege of Cairo by the leagued sovereigns in the east, and their distress arising from ignorance of those periodical inundations that fertilize and protect old Egypt; with the taking Damietta by Andrew, husband to intriguing Gertrude, shall close this portion of the thirteenth century, adding only a slight and cursory review of those *soi-disant* emperors in the east, who reigning after the time when Theodore Lascaris and Henry parted the dominion; one living at Adrianople and the other at Constantinople, no hope could be entertained of any but a lingering and feeble existence to both. Iolanta, daughter to this last named sovereign, reigned with her husband Peter comte d'Auxerre, and during his imprisonment swayed the sceptre *alone*; but the Greeks could not endure to see *Latins* as they called them, ruling at old Byzantium. They weakened the throne daily by their disputes, and sometimes injured it by their union; when a new Lascaris, married to the daughter of Bulgaria, and named Theodore Angelus, wished to take up only the title of king, and fling the faded purple quite away. John Ducas however was of another mind; he took the Isle of Cyprus in 1230, where we will finish our *Retrospection* of a portion of time peculiarly unfavourable and perplexing to epitome.

CHAP. XIX.

SECOND PORTION OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

MR. GRAY says somewhere, and says very wisely, that the *Retro-spect* of error is serviceable when it tends to vindicate the lessons of truth. Our King John's strange behaviour contributed against his own intention to ascertain his people's future liberties—a baby successor coming to the throne somewhat accelerated the then distant moment; for although governed by the wise earl of Pembroke, justly so called, that earl of Pembroke was at most a steward; and who ever saw a steward yet, that would not favour tenants rather than their landlord? The tender prince willingly confirmed our famous Magna Charta, wherein clauses were added propitious to the poor, and of consolation to the people, not then deemed dangerous by their haughty lords, who each kept up a show of royalty within their separate castles, where the Seneschal* and Chancellor, Constable and Chamberlain, lived as in petty courts; while mercenary exactions were by them practised on inferior classes, as by the sovereign himself on the nobility; till the bribes openly given and received even shock a modern reader with recital: witness the story how Hugh de Oysel presented King Henry with two robes of a green colour, for the sake of obtaining, through his in-

* The Seneschal was a person of no small consequence. There is an old tale in *Gesta Romanorum*, how an old Baron left his favourite child and dog, both creatures of inestimable value, under the care of five knights, to be fed by the Seneschalle. This officer neglectful of his charge, and going out to visit a neighbouring female, the starved blood-hound devours the baby, whilst the knights were sallied forth in quest of food. The nobleman returning, and hearing this tale, burns the Seneschalle alive.

fluence over some Flemish merchants, 1000 marks which the said Oyfel had left in Flanders, and could not get agayne : and Hoveden tells us how Richard de Neville gave one of our kings 20 palfreys for his grace's good word with Ifolda Biget, a beautiful French lady whom he wished to marry. King John had three greyhounds given on a like account, if I remember, and they had classick names, Achilles, Hannibal, and Hector : the last has been a common name for greyhounds ever since. We read likewise in some of the old books that dame Nichole paid 100 marks for permission to marry her daughter to whoever she pleased, the king's mimicks alone excepted ; nor can I find whether the exception was made because of royalty or conscience, for it had been decreed some years before, that mimicks must not be admitted to receive the holy sacrament. Such sordid desire of accumulating wealth sorts but ill, as it should seem, with military pride ; and even *l'amour des dames*, of which so much was said, appears to have been swallow'd up in avaricious rapacity, when records inform us how Robert de Veaux gave our sovereign six Lombardy steeds, and a famous hawk beside, to make him hold his tongue, and tell no tales of Henri de Pinel's wife, whose reputation seems to have depended on his silence. Such indeed was the frequency of bribes in those days, and such the necessity of an inferior's offering visible inducements to persuade nobles or princes to act as it is now deemed indispensable for every man of honour to do without persuasion, that Saint Lewis of France was canonized for having taken no presents to pervert the course of law ; and Innocent III. had been justly enough half adored for a like delicacy in all *civil* cases, although he scrupled not to sell indulgences without hesitation : angelick Fleury blames such conduct, but softens down the facts he is unable to deny. He says too, with what unjustifiable severity the court and church of Rome acted towards Bishop Grosthead, who opposed their usurpations about 1235. The pope of that day thirsted for his blood, says he ; and was dissuaded by a favourite cardinal from going to extremes, chiefly because the subtle and penetrating Italian had observed to him that Eng-

land even then fate looser than other realms did towards the see, adding, my heart tells me that island will quit or break from us one day; and so it did, continues Fleury, 300 years after his true prediction. Warton mentions a book, called *Roman d'Antichrist*, about this period; and Grosthead gave broad hints that the character was fast filling up at Rome, which was now certainly become the scarlet city, as she had long been the sanguinary. Red hats were bestow'd as a new distinction upon cardinals, and the three pontiffs who followed each other in succession after Innocent, added splendour to their city without losing ought of her authority. But every high mountain has a plain upon its top, where you run level for a while before descent commences; and there seems to be a sort of solstitial pause in governments, when they have reached their utmost elevation: perhaps the appearance may be fallacious, owing to the *obliquity* of the sphere; those who live under the *equator* are not conscious of it; yet it was undoubtedly so with pagan, and I think with papal Rome. Contentions concerning the blessed Trinity, and its inexplicable nature, had ended some time since; yet were those disputes rather finished by fatigue at last, than reconciled by reason or reflexion: for however we see fire, water, and air, creatures exposed to constant observation, subsisting in and for and through and by each other all day long; there never was wise mortal could *tell how*: and yet this limited and arrogant animal, this still more unaccountable *man*, will daringly presume to pry into his Maker's essence, and resist redemption till he is made acquainted with the constituent substance of his Redeemer, never discovering by common sense, what indifference and apathy embraced as soon as found:

That points obscure 'twere of small use to learn,
But common quiet was mankind's concern.

Oh wretched state of poor humanity! While I am lamenting the fervour which glowed up into madness in the early ages of Christianity, insulting heaven by trying to tear down the mystick veil that keeps
our

our fight from agony of knowledge, I am forced to regret that in the days I am writing no spark of fervour seems to remain at all; no warmth of love, no zealous spirit of defence, no desire of impressing our truly petrified hearts either with ideas of the glorious majesty of a judging God, or sweet remembrance of a meek and gentle Saviour. The sanctifying spirit seems far off too: is it too late to pray the Comforter for consolation? Let us make haste before the doors be shut. But I return to the thirteenth century; when transubstantiation first insisted on, roused up anew the sleeping genius of contention; and strange to think, those who accounted themselves good Athanasians were the most willing to adopt this notion, although the doctrine was most natural to Docetes, who held it not unworthy the God of truth to impose fallacious appearances on man, and cheat his creatures into faith and obedience. The Homoousians were, as the name implied, *consubstantia-*lists; and such the Lutherans of Saxony to this day remain, persuaded that Christ does certainly unite his own corporeal body to the eucharist for our salvation, which first induced him to assume it; but resolutely denying that at the priest's touch all particles of bread and wine forsake the cup and patera. Jesus on many occasions appealed to the senses of his followers, commanded them to touch him that they might be sure he was not a spirit, and even, for further conviction, eat with them after he was resuscitated. Yet the Docetes thought 'twas all illusion, and those who admit transubstantiation are as clearly of opinion as *they* were, that our own senses are not to be trusted. But there were other reasons for this credence; the *court* of Rome more than the church promoted the idea; priests were more respected when at their command a present miracle was wrought, and men were willing for *their* sakes to forget that our blessed Saviour's flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, without interposition of inferior agency. The Roman senate now was once again a senate of which Honorius and Gregory, successors to Innocent III. were in every sense dictators, and to chuse a prefect the head of the empire was no more consulted: Pontifex

tifex Maximus was sole governor and happy 'twas for him who escaped the Dolabra. Romagna, Umbria, territory of Ancona, Orbicello and Viterbo, all rich and prosperous places, acknowledged themselves *immediate* subjects to the Pope, and every other nation was ruled *remotely* by his *agents*. Leipzig meanwhile, and Gravelines, were added to the cities of Europe; Padua and Naples boasted their universities, founded by Frederick II. Glanville's laws were read; Vienna would not remain behind; the college of Sorbonne was instituted, and learning struggled hard with her oppressors. Albertus Magnus enter'd the lists of improvement, and made an automaton of great celebrity, a man of brass, who spoke, and it was easy for contemporary wonderers to tell in addition, how he both asked and answered questions; till at length he grew so talkative, that Thomas Aquinas, afterward the seraphic Doctor, well known to fame, but then pupil to Albertus Magnus, knocked him down for disturbing his studies. Don Quixote's adventure of the brazen head alludes perhaps to this incident, and the belief on't by vulgar readers; perhaps the intended inference at first was, that mathematics take a man off from metaphysical researches, and plague him by driving all things up to a demonstration, till the enraged ontologist silences their suggestions by violence. Be that as it may, civilization and improvement were surely creeping on; the windows in England were all glazed, and wind-mills erected for the purpose of grinding corn: while commerce might be discerned swelling the waves of science as she returned towards that coast where we set up our telegraph of *Retrospection*. The widow'd queen of Scotland had a jointure of 1000l. o'year appointed her in this century: and although Guthrie says that wine was sold at the apothecary's shops as a cordial so late as 1270, we know that William king of Scots, when he paid homage to Cœur de Lion, was allowed from our sovereign's table four quarts of wine every day, besides twelve *simnels*, a sort of plumb-cake with saffron crust, yet known by that name at Shrewsbury. I believe the wine was hock and rhenish, because sweeter and heavier produce
from

from southern vintages was scarce arrived among us, although the customs brought 1000l. into the port of London, during one of the many years Henry III. reigned in our land: then honoured by the birth and labours of immortal Bacon, styled, as he well deserved to be, Doctor Mirabilis, when like another Archimedes he discovered the occult powers of nature in her deepest recesses, with scarce a light to guide or to assist his search, save what irradiated his own superior soul; kindled by that unquenched spark of general knowledge, never yet *totally*, though often *hopelessly* sunk in the socket of decay, and long kept from expansion by the foul air of barbarick tyranny. This genius of giantick mold lifting his head above surrounding vapours, saw soon how chemistry might be applied to her best uses, medicine. He discovered the powers of a burning glass and the proportions of a camera-obscura: he knew the spherical figure of our earth, and was (as one would think) by intuition well persuaded of what experience has since confirmed. He looked on science as Moses on the Promised Land from Pisgah, and discerned effects in their possibilities. His skill in mechanism may have been too highly praised; his conviction of its efficacy to purposes then unknown, cannot be sufficiently admired. We have done nothing since the time of Roger Bacon beyond *his* capacity of hope and of belief. Gunpowder, æther, electricity, are but new names for things easily, though faintly to be descried, by those who carefully examine his *opus magnus*, where it appears that he knew every thing except the vast extent of human folly, which after wondering at such wisdom, deemed it madness: and after mature deliberation, resolved to denounce it as witchcraft. *magnus*

Those dubious days could not distinguish superiority from eccentricity of character. Five suns supposed to have appeared all at once, disgrace the remarkable occurrences of this reign, and disgrace it the more, because the grand conjunction of planets in Libra had been observed all over Europe in 1186. But the world, as Fuller says, sees most

most visions when she is most blind ; and fairies now, a new importation of semi-deities from the east, were seriously believed in. This is so true, that the Ashmolean collection of MSS at Oxford, exhibits “ A sure way to bind a faery, Elaby *Gathon* by name, and hold her to “ a Venice glass meekly and mildly, till she have answered all lawful “ questions.” Ireland, where this folly flourished still better than with us, is said to have named a whole district from these tripping elves ; *o’ferri* land, or land *o’faerie*, as *Gatton* in Surrey was called after *Elaby*.*

There is a humorous story recorded too, how the earl of Devonshire, A. D. 1240, asked a farmer of his how he could bear his situation, seeing that his grange was reported to be much *troubled by faeries*, which, adds the nobleman, may peradventure be spirits from hell.— “ Right honoured lord, (replied the quaint fellow) there be verily two “ faints blessed in heaven which do trouble me more than all the de- “ vils in hell, and in true sadness those be the Mother of our Lord and “ St. Michael the archangel, because it is on their days that I am “ bound to pay his dues to the good earl of Devonshire.”

If Bryant’s derivation of the gryphons be a true one, *kir-ouph-on* pronounced quick and short, as is most likely : the *ouph* comes from the same country as that composite animal, which Milton, ever accurate though sublime, describes so properly :

“ As when a gryphon thro’ the wilderness
“ With winged course o’er hill or moory dale
“ Pursues the Arimaspiæ, who by stealth
“ Had from his wakeful custody purloin’d
“ The guarded gold,” &c.

* From Elaby comes *lullaby*, *l’elaby*, invoked by mothers and nurses to watch over the sleeping babe, who safe in her protection, was in no danger of being changed by wicked spirits into an *ideot*, whence *changeling*.

About

About the year 1236 was published a romance called *Alifaunder* or *Escander's Atchievements of Knighthood*; he soared in the air by help of *gryphons* coming very near the moon, and with aid of a magical glass, dived in the deep and saw the fishes swim; perhaps Shakespear alluded to this stuff when *Hotspur* says—

“ By heaven methinks it were an easy leap
 “ To pluck bright honour from the pale-fac'd moon,
 “ Or dive into the bottom of the deep
 “ And drag up drowned honour by the locks.”

The scholars say indeed, that even this book was borrowed from a Persian manuscript, and wits tell one that Scuderi drew many incidents from thence. Certain it is, that Alexander's exploits were remembered in the east a prodigious time, and with unobliterated veneration: his history by Quintus Curtius, although unmentioned for 1000 years after the author's death, was one of the earliest books on the revival of literature, and Montfaucon mentions a copy in the Colbertine library, as early as the year 800; the following extract from which, may be cited to excuse the numberless things to be forgiven in this summary: “*Equidem plura transcribo quam credo; nam nec affirmare sustineo de quibus dubito, nec subducere quæ accepi,*” but the awkward imitators add a story of Alexander's *bugle-horn*, which no wight but himself could wield, and might be heard sixty miles. Boyardo and Berni enjoyed this horn too; it dropt to them, but not till Robin Hood had done with it. He was a sort of secondary hero among us in the thirteenth century: Dr. Stukely thinks he was an outlaw'd earl of Huntingdon *FitzOoth*, easily corrupted to *Fitzhood*, and mentions his coat-armour. Whatever he was *before*, he was *after* his outlawry, as I imagine, Robin *o'th'ood*, meaning of *the wood* corrupted to Hood, and the manner in which he and his companions lived among *forests*, defending and providing for themselves with their bow, is interesting and

curious, and strongly marks the manners of the times.* That 'twas by a gradual and long course of experiments that men's eyes opened to wisdom and decorum, may be exemplified by recollecting how Lewis the dauphin, (he who had invaded England) desiring a marriage with Urraca, daughter of Alphonso king of Spain, by a sister of Cœur de Lion, was turned from his purpose on its being represented to him that the princess, though fair, had a very *unlucky name*, and would

* The old ballad which tells how

*The father of Robin a forester was,
And shot in a lustie long bow ;*

must, if this account be true, suffer dismissal from our *Retrospection*, and I should confess myself sorry, because when they brought

*Adam Bell and Clym of the clough,
And William of Cloudeflye,
To shoot with our forester for forty marks,
Our forester beat them all three.*

Though the last saved his own and his companions lives long after by his archery, when the king hearing that his sheriff and justices were all shot at merye Carlisle, attempting to take these outlaws, sent troops to bring them to London, but they were come of themselves, or at least bold William of Cloudeflye who brought his little boy beside, to beg a charter of peace, and now says king Henry they shall sure be hanged ; but the queen requested their life ; and her husband said, let us see them shoot which have cost us all this care. After many feats, William set an apple upon his own child's head, and standing 120 yards distance, cleft it with an arrow. The king had sworn that if he miss'd, the attempt should revoke his pardon.

*For if thou touch his head or gown,
In syghte that men may see,
By all the sayntes that sit in heaven,
I'll hang you up all three.*

Success in that business saved and advanced them all, and the youth was made cellar-keeper to the queen.

certainly

certainly bring him no children. He accordingly wedded her sister Lady Blanche, of fewer charms but happier appellation, and on her was made the verse preserved by Camden in his remaynes of a greater work.

Candida, candescens, candore in cordis et oris.

While Urraca rejected by all, hid her unfortunate name in a nunnery, where she was called sister Teresa; and her sponors' cruelty lay unremembered in men's minds, till her death, by fall of a slate or tile as she was walking in the convent garden, revived the recollection that *'twas indeed unlucky*. Lady Blanche meanwhile, made mother of St. Louis, an exemplary prince, confirmed mankind in these fantastick notions; the more perhaps as being regent in her son's minority, she soon suppressed the barons' bold rebellion headed by Philip, the first duke of Orleans, uncle and competitor to his lawful king; from whom her forces took the castle of Blois, forcing him into submission, and I think to banishment. A marriage between her incomparable son Lewis the IXth. and the daughter of unhappy Raymond Comte de Thoulouse, produced another blessing to all Europe, the end of a truly savage war, long carried on in his dominions against the Albigenes. *Languedoc*, so named from *langue de got*, as many think, being from that time united to the crown of France, some Huguenots have always sheltered there; we saw them inhabiting Grenoble and its environs when the communion was administered *in a cave* for privacy, so late as 1786.

But this inimitable sovereign turned his arms only against the Turks and Saracens; to them he shewed himself son of Lewis, surnamed the Lion, performing acts worthy a hero, while his own country flourished at home as under the protection of a saint. Such was his faith, says Bossuet, that one would have thought him eye-witness of his Saviour's sufferings, and such his works, as if he had made him the immediate, not remote model for his imitation.

Another of his panegyrist's says—"I have myself seen the saint sit
" under a spreading tree, and patiently hearing his subjects complain
" of mutual oppression or offence, render them the strictest justice."

He published likewise a wise ordonnance, known by the name of Royal Truce, prohibiting all persons from commencement of hostilities against an adversary till forty days had elapsed since the cause of quarrel had been given or found: this gave time for friends to interpose, and for the parties themselves to cool; and greatly contributed to restrain those internal and private wars which thinn'd population, drenched all lands with blood, and disgraced humanity during the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries. Monarchs were indeed diligent to stop a practice so ruinous to their realms, and so insulting to their authority; and the invention of giving bonds not to draw out their forces for such or such a limited time began to be adopted, to the no small consolation of vassals, who were till then obliged to follow their superior lord into the field, and fight against their neighbours in his quarrel. 'Twas kings who civilized the world a *second* time, by synthesizing what had been too much broken into small parts, and the peasant, artizan, &c. felt relieved from his too nearly approximated tyrant, in proportion as monarchy gained ascendance over the nobles, and kept *their* cruelties in check.

To accelerate that happy moment, we find Ferdinand of Castile fixing a yet existing seminary at Salamanca, and Alphonso the Xth. brother to Lady Blanche, seeking renown for his knowledge in astronomy, and composing tables for that science, which to this hour go by his name. The impious speech concerning his knowing better how to construct a solar system than God Almighty, was, we hope, only a strong and coarse expression of contempt for the Ptolemaic hypothesis. A prince who was said to possess a fine copy of the Holy Scriptures, which he had read six times through, was most unlikely sure to be an infidel, and he who made it his pleasure to contemplate
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the starry-heavens, could never have been an atheist: while his quiet unresisting spirit of humility when his favourite son Don Sancho deposed and drove him into retirement, manifested less of haughtiness or vain glory, than of Christian resignation to an enemy still dear and cherished, however rebellious and unworthy.

Northern nations retained the frost upon their literature longer. The violent out-break of Gillespey Rofse stains the Scottish annals, when Caithness all rose up at once, and burned the bishop in his bed for having exacted too large a bribe from one of their nobility. Private wars went on fiercely in *those* countries, where the exploits of Percy and Douglas yet serve happily as materials for two beautiful modern dramas, and Thomas, a bastard of the high constable, Alan of Galway, invaded his half-sisters, to whom their father had left his inheritance, with no fewer than a thousand men, armed in his cause, who wasted their lands with fire and sword, much to the shame of gallantry and knighthood; till Roger de Quincy, married to one of the ladies, fought and killed this sturdy marauder, and in the same battle dispersed his adherents for ever. Women, not seldom enough to excite wonder, appeared on horseback, *with spurris sharpe*, as Chaucer afterwards describes his Wife of Bath, animating the men who combated in their defence; and if they were feudatorial inheritors, wore their father's device, or, as we call it, coat armour, emblazoned in a *lozenge*, (they were ashamed to bear a *shield*) on their breast. Hume says they acted, if possessed of lands, as sheriffs of that county they inhabited, and to say truth, Spenser's Lady of the Castle glances at this old custom. Meanwhile our third Henry displeased his subjects much by his offensive preference of foreigners, or as they were then styled, *aliens*; and I think we may date from his reign that spirit of claiming exclusive attention from their sovereign which in succeeding times has always marked an Englishman. When in the year 1250 he held a showy festival in France, a jocator, born in Hampshire, stepped forward, as we're told, and with a permitted gibe, said—"Send away Cœur de Lion's shield out of the
" hall,

“hall, my liege, else your fine dinner will have no digesters. You see these French fellows are afraid to look on it: the thoughts of Richard takes away their appetite.” This was more than a biting jest, for ’twas a true one: Joinville acknowledges that when a Frenchman’s horse started under him, the common exclamation of anger was, “*Qu’as tu? vois tu le Roi Richard?*” What ails you? do you see King Richard coming? Such *pageauntes* had been exhibited in Westminster however, in honour of the marriage between Henry III. of England and Eleanor de Provence*, as made all Europe marvel: such pypinge and tabouringe, as the old bookes expresse it, with sports, gestes and diseurs innumerable.—Tales beside, new and old, of St. Theseus and his hunting match, (whence Shakespear’s description of his hounds) and Launcelot du Lac, a story in high vogue, with a spiritual remembrancer of Jesus hanging on a roode, whilst a base and recreant knight came forth and *jousted* with him, fetching blood and water from his side with his lance; but Joseph of Arimathea, creeping out, holdeth a bottle under, and bringeth into Albion to cure all diseases, that precious relique.

Such was the renown of these celebrations, and so were the expences of their decorations admired at, that although the birth of Cimabue announced the nascent arts budding in Italy, Pope Innocent the fourth said that he half lamented that new dignity which hindered him from attending so very elegant and edifying a show: finding it however, wholly impossible to come over himself in person, he sent his old favourite fool to partake the festivities, and who received thirty shillings beside from our sovereign—*royal gift*: nor was it merely for the sake of such nonsense that the learned Genoese, so respected for his knowledge and virtue, while Cardinal St. Lorenzo, wished to witness our improvements in Great Britain; he desired to behold *Divitias Londini* as well as *Delicias Westmonasterii*, as he said. We had a mayor and aldermen established then for conservation of our city’s peace, and ster-

* Second daughter, I think, to Raymond, Count de Thoulouse.

ling money coined for common use, called *so*, as some say, from the figure of a starling imprest upon the metal. Reading glasses and spectacles facilitated every branch of science, and commerce began to call in the arts and luxuries of other realms. The distractions of Ireland indeed, torn by the factious quarrels of Mac Arthys and Geraldines, yielded the conquering country little save disquiet, evincing ever the sad effects of a too feeble government, that wished for plunder rather than authority; while Wales, unwilling to yield up her independence, continued to oppose what she was unable to subdue, and the Dictum of Kennelworth confesses the melancholy state of society in provinces far removed from the capital even of England, where knights and 'squires *caught in robbery*, if they had no land, were doomed to give half their goods to the king, and find security for future good behaviour. This however was better than the mode adopted in the century *before* this, when no nearer method could be found to keep people safe from such banditti, than the fetching out some bishop who lived near, *to curse the thieves*, which he did by saying, "May your eyes be
" be blind who see but to covet your neighbours' goods, and may your
" hands be disabled that seek to steal them." If this had no effect, the matter was hopeless, and the plunderers could be subdued only by superior force. Softer manners were gaining ground in France, where to the court of love and honour, now so long erected, all high and grave disputes of gallantry and heroism appealed, as the head quarters of amorous and valiant etiquette. Fontenelle acknowledges that the records of this court were the legitimate parents of French poesy, and that *Scuderi à puisé bien la dedans*, when the romances of Clelia and the Grand Cyrus were composed. But Lewis the ninth was born to confer happiness in this world, and receive it in the other: he maintained every institution likely to dispense comforts and blessings among his own subjects, and heard not without horror how the Emperor had corrupted Pietro di Vinci, page to Pope Innocent, and prevailed on him to seek his sovereign's life; but being detected by the fool before-mentioned,

mentioned, he had the strange presence of mind to escape punishment by running suddenly against the wall, and dashing his brains out before the pontiff's face.

But 'tis time to turn our *Retrospection* eastward, and observe Zingis Khan little aware that the days were gone by when universal monarchy was like to be endured, pressing forward with a conqueror's rapidity, passing Mount Caucasus, and having already subjected to his arms all Media, Parthia, Persia, and Armenia, began, when struggling in the fens of Meotis, to consider what next should be done by force, to which he had hitherto found little or no resistance. The result was founding a new empire, still known by the name of the Mogul's Empire, which owed its origin to this Tartar chief; nor were his descendants dispossessed of many valuable possessions in its vicinage, till Tamerlane arose, nearly two centuries after, and made a change in oriental history. The two sons of his first born *Toulichan* however, he who was left by Zingis or Gengis upon the throne of Persia, made a successful war on the Chinese, and *Coblachan* of the same line was (if I mistake not) ruler of *that* populous region in 1280. During the course of exploits which settled an imperial court at Agra and Delhi, under an emperor who professed *unitarianism*, and was, Mr. Gibbon says, of the same religion as our philosopher Locke, many believing Christians of the Greek church suffered extreme distress, though Ducas continued to sit fast at Adrianople, and even increased his dominions and authority; notwithstanding which Nicephorus the patriarch would not permit him to enter the church over which he presided, whilst a female favourite kept him from marrying and continuing the succession in a legitimate way, with Princess Ann, daughter of Frederick II. to whom he had been long contracted. The successful rival endeavoured but in vain to set her paramour against the patriarch. Ducas, more liberal, acknowledged the fault his passions permitted him not to amend, and quietly returned home from the church door, saying that Nicephorus had done his duty. She had better success in civil than in ecclesiastick

tick affairs—her lover making, at her request, *despots*, as they were called, of Angelo and his son, who obtained the favour through their influence with this pernicious beauty. A famine felt by the adjacent regions, from which the dominions of Ducas were exempt, gave him courage, as it appears, to continue in his course, notwithstanding his own disapprobation; and the profits made by sale of eggs alone, when they became so dear, grew in such a degree extensive, that Ducas made from them alone a diadem of prodigious value, and called it an *ovata*. Finding his subjects much disposed meanwhile, to barter away the solid gold gained of his neighbours' misery for showy apparel brought from far distant regions, this Emperor, often called in history Vataces, made a decree that all should wear the manufactures of their own country, obliging even the favourite lady to set an example, since imitated by many prudent and judicious sovereigns. 'Twas nearly coeval with these events, I think, that Baldwin II. pupil and son-in-law to John de Brienne, whom Innocent the third had made King of Jerusalem, presented the Venetians with the lance, supposed to have pierced our Saviour's side, the sponge dipt in vinegar at his crucifixion, and a piece of the true cross. These the republic sold to St. Lewis for an immense sum of money, and he deposited them among the *trésors de St. Denis*, where they were regularly shewn to travellers, with the shield fished out of the Rhone in time of Charlemagne, having the contenance of Scipio chased upon it, and being for that reason imagined, absurdly enough, to have belonged to Scipio himself. Their destruction by frantick rioters however, within these last ten years, affords small triumph to the levelling cause. For though men who despise all sacred relicks may laugh, and those who delight in rare antiquities may weep; though cool examiners may reasonably doubt the genuineness of many—and the value of all, yet will each feeling heart sigh at seeing time-honoured trifles thus suddenly although deliberately destroyed. What Charlemagne had preserved, and Lewis the ninth had venerated, was it for Robespierre and Marat to destroy?

But 'tis time to contemplate another character. Frederick II. Emperor of the West, whose long reign of forty years almost was marked with many extraordinary events, began to attract attention from his contemporaries, and claims a glance of our *Retrospect* since the year 1230, when he had already driven the Saracens from Sicily, punished in a strange and cruel manner Pope Innocent the third's two brothers, French noblemen, who held some places in Apulia, and broke the great Count d'Isenberg upon the wheel. Eager to reign if possible in more forms than one, he crowned his forward boy Henry at nine years old, associating him in the empire, while Pope Honorius III. hoping to unite the three sceptres in one command once more, and by that means check the progress of Mahometanism in the east, proposed a match between Frederick and Iolanta, daughter to Brenne, commonly called King John of Jerusalem, and who had herself ruled at Constantinople during the imprisonment of Peter Count d'Auxerre, her first husband, who, after many vicissitudes of fortune, was at length strangled at a feast by Theodore Lascaris. In order to give additional splendour to such nuptials, Frederick and Iolanta met at Rome, where Pope Honorius himself performed the ceremony, all the clergy attending in *pontificalibus*, the magistrates in scarlet robes. The project failed however, the lady died in child-bed, in ten months, leaving an infant son; John Ducas stirred not from his seat at Adrianople, and all the effect produced was, that the Emperor called himself King of Sicily and of Jerusalem, and his descendants took the title as in course. 'Twas now high time that Frederick should set forward for the Holy Land, and see the misery that had befallen the leagued princes (of whom an army always remained in the environs) since the Sultan of Egypt had called them to attempt the Nile-defended city of Grand Cairo in vain. The king of floods surrounding that place with his protecting arms, frustrated completely such mad designs, obtaining the restoration of Damietta too, while Pope Gregory IX. successor to Honorius, excommunicated our western emperor Frederick, for feigning

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ing sickness in order to avoid the journey. He had however many cogent reasons for delay. The duke of Bavaria, on whom he chiefly relied for care of his home-concerns, was dead; so was Iolanta, on whose account he expected to receive homage in the east: while Henry, the youth he was in such haste to crown, had contracted a marriage with the daughter of Leopold, *archduke of Austria*, a new title conferred by Gregory, who looked without displeasure on his attempts to depose his father, and reign himself alone, although not yet sixteen years of age.

Strong measures were now necessary. Frederick, with one hundred and twenty thousand ounces of gold, purchased his absolution from the pope; and after seeing his own active and dangerous son safe in a close confinement, set out for Syria, where during his absence Gaza, Askelon, and Jerusalem had submitted, and the Lord's sepulchre, till then unpolluted, had been purposely defiled: notwithstanding that the Templars displayed even ferocious valour. Thibault of Navarre lent for a short time his assistance, and our Richard earl of Cornwall distinguished himself among the foremost for high heroick deeds. 'Spite of all this however, victorious Turcism entered triumphantly the holy city; whilst our western emperor was, I believe, not unjustly accused of loitering his time away, though late in life, and widower to two Christian princesses, with the Circassian beauties of the east. Such was the ill-will of the Pope to this prince and his conduct, that he even wrote to the sultan not to treat with him. A truce of ten years was concluded notwithstanding; and Frederick having flung a young pike into the pool of Hebron, said he would return to that country no more. The fish had a gold ring round it with the date; and being caught alive one hundred and fifty years after, weighing fourscore pounds, is brought forwards as a proof how long such animals will live. The story however *must* be false, so far as relates to its immense growth at least, for the ring would not stretch, I suppose, and without that the fish's identity could not have been ascertained. Many lies have indeed been told

of this brave but impious, and often perjured sovereign, who now invaded Italy sword in hand, and being equally related to Gwelfs and Gibellines, expected the leaders of both factions would be with him. The first-named party, in contradiction to his ill-placed hopes, sided with Gregory in this unnatural contest: so did the Venetians, who burned all his ships, and possessed themselves of Apulia. For their good services against infidels of *all* denomination, as the Pope expressed it, he granted their patriarch a power of wearing a mitre of peculiar shape, and bearing upon solemn occasions in his hand a sort of pastoral staff. Meanwhile the Genoese, having fomented insurrections in Candia, Regner Dandulo went thither and soon quelled it. Morosini was elected doge, and is the first upon record chosen to that dignity by ballot: but his republick increased in riches and power every day, while commerce seemed to consider their port as the general mart of all Europe.

Primislaus of Bohemia indeed, surnamed Ottocar, from Othisgar, meaning, as Dubravius says, a partizan of Otho, who had opposed Frederick II. in his early days, endeavoured to extend his dominions nearer the Adriatick, and purchased Carinthia, Carniola, and other territories, of a childless Prince who had no heirs; his only brother being bishop of Saltzburg. Such a neighbour was not agreeable to Venice, as the same Ottocar tried likewise for Stiria, but was diverted from his purpose by jealousy of his queen, sister to Frederick: her he repudiated first, then poisoned, and took another princess who was barren. His last lady was Cunegund, daughter to the Duke of Maffovia, the French writers call him *Roi des Bulgares*. Ottocar was about to dispatch *her* likewise; but hearing she was pregnant, spared her life, which she owed to her unborn son; while Margaret, wife to Viribolaus an earl of Cracovia, I think a Christian, was delivered, as Cromerus and Yagouin both tell us, of thirty-six boys at one birth. But much of Poland and of Prussia was relapsed into idolatry since the crusades had carried away their instructors; and Lesco, surnamed the
Black,

Black, was a scourge rather than a ruler in that hapless country, which he delighted to desolate by hunting, chasing beasts for his subjects as it appears, rather than men.

The Semiramis of the north however must not be forgotten. About the year 1230 Margaret de Waldemar had married William of Dampiere, and bought the government of Bruges, which was burned down to the ground, and Antwerpen soon followed. Joan her original competitor in Flanders drove that whole party out, and reigned alone a while: but wedding Thomas duke of Savoy, he, though victorious, was in haste to return home after his wife's death, and Margaret reigned again, being a widow, with the young boy she had by Dampiere, named after his father *William*. John, her son by the duke of Hainault, rebelled, and after deluges of blood spilt in this quarrel the pope was appealed to, and confirmed King *William*, giving to John his father's dukedom only. Another contest followed, and Margaret lost Nemours to her eldest son, from whom she was forced to purchase peace with an immense sum of money. William earl of *Holland*, meantime, no longer *Hallant*, who built his palace at the Hague, and was set up by the pope as emperor against Frederick, having been crowned by his command in Syria, after his taking Aken from the Saracens; sided with John against Queen Margaret, and was soon struck at a banquet by an unknown hand with a poniard. The life which escaped that accident was lost by another: after this luckless festival at Utrecht, William went on a winter campaign against the Frizons, and riding away from his company upon the ice, his horse stuck with him, and they were not disentangled till after death. A marriage between his son and Margaret's daughter Beatrice, who brought with her all Zealand in dower, composed the publick contentions in that part of the world, where in a private war about the same period, the warlike bishop of Utrecht besieging a rebellious vassal in his house, was unhappily taken in arms by the enemy, his head struck off and nailed to the castle wall, as we do kites in remote parts of England.

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The first league of Swisses marked these annals also. Aventine places the institution of the seven electors early in the papacy of Gregory X: and wearied with vexatious occurrences in our own neighbourhood, if *Retrospection* turns her eyes towards the east, what sees she there but the fierce sultan in possession of that hallowed spot, sanctified first by our Redeemer's sufferings, kiss'd with warm veneration by his servant Constantine, and rescued by Godfrey de Boulogne with millions of human lives? Sees too a nascent empire born with Ottoman its founder, destined when adolescent, to destroy and wholly extirpate all remains of Christianity at and around its first imperial seat. Here then let blushing narrative be still, or taking breath in a new chapter, seek for some scenes less likely to afflict our powers of *Retrospection*.

CHAP. XX.

TO THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1300.

IF we would console the *Retrospector's* eye, we must not let it turn to men but things: not to the blood-red page of historick annals, but to the verdant field where springing arts and growing sciences promise, by still fresh improvement, perpetual green. No period of time will shew people much *better* than those of another period: but the last years of the thirteenth century contributed exceedingly to make them *happier* than they had been, and give them opportunity of procuring knowledge and wealth, those great instruments of good to man; if for good purpose he will please to use them. About the year 1260 'twas that Marco Paulo, a Venetian, having made a journey to China, brought home with him the inestimable invention, called the mariner's compass, a felicity so envied, that almost every nation in Europe has laid claim to the merit of first discovering a secret which *they* are now supposed to have possessed since the days of their famous astrologer Chiningus, who is computed to have lived eleven hundred and twenty years before the birth of Christ; coetaneous with Homer, and I think with Solomon. What confirms the conjecture of Paulo's importation is, that his countrymen continued for many years to use the compass in the manner the Chinese use it still, letting it float upon a little piece of cork, instead of suspending it to a pivot. Flavio Givia di Melfi, in the Territorio di Principato, forty years after, taught the *present* method;

thod; and to him has the original invention been ascribed; as America was named after the second, not the first adventurer who touch'd her shores. 'Tis certain that the district where Flavio was born, tho' a small portion of the Neapolitan state, has since that time given the compass for coat armour. But France claims the honour of the discovery too, and brings in proof of her pretensions, that every country as well as her own makes use of a *fleur de lis* to distinguish the north point of the card; and some old verses of Guyot de Provence, preserved by Fauchet, do certainly mention the *marinette* or *mariner's stone*, as early as the year 1202, or thereabouts.

That England might not be left out, Doctor Wallis makes us observe, that our word *compass* is the *word* by which all other nations know the *thing*; and as he says, to take a *compass*, means to make a circle certainly. These are however mere sports of learning; for if France knew so long ago, why was it not used? and as to the word, *bouffole* or *buffola* are oftener said than *compass* by all foreign sailors. Italy, where every thing either first sprung or was restored to second life, has the true claim to this invention, which facilitates commerce between distant nations, makes communication easy between friends, and propagates the gospel in regions far remote.

Poetry followed mathematicks at a distance: for embellishment is not sought for till necessity is satisfied. Our earliest love-song is a mean composition enough; our earliest pastoral ballad is pretty for the time 'twas written in; but there was no *affectation* in the joy express'd to see tokens of a bright season in latitude 54; all the thoughts are natural, and the description true. Hawkins has preserved the musical notes to these pretty lines: they were more complicated than the words, but musick had the start of both her sisters; she revived long before either painting or poesy raised their weak heads; and architecture, broken into small parts by the Goths, was hardly yet beginning to put those parts neatly together.

Sumner

Sumer is i cumen
 Llud sing cuccu :
 Groweth fed and bloweth med
 And springeth the wde nu.
 Sing cuccu cuccu.
 Awe bleteth after lombe,
 Louth after calve cu ;
 Bullock sterteth
 Bucke verteth,
 Murie sing cuccu.
 Wel sing thu cuccu,
 Ne swik thou never nu.

Summer is coming
 Sing cuckoo sing ;
 The meadows are blooming
 The hedges in spring.

Hark ! the ewes and lambs are bleating,
 Calves the parent call repeating ;
 Answer cuckoo to their loo.
 See our lusty bullock start
 While to harbour hies the hart :
 Cuckoo ! be thou merry too,
 Sing my bird, and cry cuckoo.

While these improvements cheer one's remembrance of England and Italy, Fleuri affrights one by saying, that in the year 1270, after St. Louis died, there we set up a sect of men in France who found out forsooth that the world was *ab eterno* ; that in the Deity was no trinity, that a resurrection of the body was impossible, and that death was an eternal sleep. In 500 years this sect, which it appears never *slept at all*, burst out to the confusion of all human kind :—'twas reading Aristotle first turned their heads, and the present boobies, who scarce ever heard his tenets, take them up upon trust ; but we must return from wicked and foolish opinions to facts not more consolatory. 170,000 Christians being slaughter'd in the east within one week or less, the pope made offer of Jerusalem to Louis le Pieux, which he refused ; and our Henry of England said that perchance devotion had dried up all his cousin's ambitious humours—if it was offer'd to *his* son, the honour should not be despised. The Tartars meantime, under Haalon their chief, made shew of assisting the Christian potentates, and in pure good will toward them, as 'twas alledged, seized on Aleppo ; but our people, nothing aware that the best temper is an assimilating one, and that gold, the richest of all metals, is most willing to amalgamate with others, chose rather to dispute and quarrel with these haughty Ishmaelites, than to conciliate their affections and convert them to our faith.

After committing a thousand rakish follies, they at length killed the nephew of Guirboca, lieutenant to Prince Haalon, in a drunken broil or frolick, set on foot by over-swilled Danes, and hot-headed Englishmen, amid the streets of Damascus: by this mad action provoking the deputy, who was beginning to solicit baptism, and making the man swear to renounce in future all communication with strangers whose morality tallied so ill with the religion they professed.

Guirboca therefore hastened to revenge his kinsman's murder, and falling upon Cæsarea sword in hand, burned it, and delivered up the inhabitants to plunder. Nor were our Europeans better treated by the Mameluc princes in Egypt, who took and destroyed the city of Joppa, having with some difficulty forced Antioch, the place where Christians first were called such, slaughtering no fewer than 20,000 in her streets. Such dreadful tidings from the Holy Land roused the last efforts of expiring heroism in the soul of Lewis, best, bravest, wisest, greatest amongst his contemporary sovereigns. The hoary warrior would immediately to Palestine, and with him take along his sons, his brother, and Guy earl of Flanders, likewise young Edward, eldest-born and heir to England, surnamed Longshanks, who had been presented to the throne of Sicily by Alexander that succeeded Innocent IV. at Rome. Whilst he and Lewis were upon their voyage, Prince Conrade, son to Frederick and Iolanta, disputed the succession of the western empire with Henry Landgrave of Thuringia, and William Earl of Holland: in these struggles Capua was dismantled, and Naples nearly destroyed by this ambitious youth, who not contented with success against his foes, murdered his elder brother Henry, once haughty and aspiring as himself, but become by time and sorrow a truly inoffensive creature; many years detained in close confinement, till sick and old and helpless, incapable of giving umbrage, he was at length forced to yield up his throat to an assassin: for this superfluous, as sinful fratricide, Conrade became an object of detestation to all Europe, most so to Manfred, son of Frederick the long-lived by an eastern fav'rite, a fair Georgian or Circassian lady, with whom he had passed his time in Pa-

lestine and Syria. This prince, under pretence of presenting Conrade with refreshment, administered poison to him in a bowl of sherbet, and looked on the tortures it occasioned with a savage delight. Such success had the progeny of impious Frederick ! to whom was attributed the famous book *de Tribus Impostoribus*, always talked of but never seen ; and which if it ever was composed at all, must have been a much more modern composition.* At Adrianople now reigned a baby Ducas, son, as I think, to Lascaris the younger ; but Palæologus his preceptor, after defeating Angelo the Greek Emperor, in the lad's name, put his eyes out, and sent his infant sisters into Italy. Dante's birth there announced the quick reviving flame of literature at Florence, where painting resolved not to be left behind. All Europe gave signs of resuscitation ; arts, manufactures, commerce, felt the quickening spirit, and a new city, Stockholm, adorned the banks of the Baltic sea. The last of the crusades was now on foot, kings found employment growing up at home ; the world had been composed at first like fine Greek architecture of large masses, which with small pains produce a sudden and sublime effect. The feudal system broke it into small independent pieces ; gothick ideas in building run quite parallel ; yet when with ages of heavy toil they have at length formed their firm set and sharply pointed arches, and brought their numerous angles to cement—the whole makes no unvenerable appearance—and to lament its ruin is but natural. Towards the last years of the eventful period, which holds our *Retrospect* to 1250, and from thence forward till A. D. 1300, the last effort of union was made for purpose of regaining Palestine ; nor did the king of France find even *his* devotion swallow up all prudence, or care for his own dominion and that of his country. Edward of England had an active spirit, and soon was likely to possess a crown which had fate loosely on weak Henry's head for more than half

* The king did indeed say that if God Almighty had ever seen Naples, he would not sure have bestowed that odious country Palestine on his profess'd favourites ; but I count little on such indecorous speeches, as proofs of infidelity in rough days.

a century : Lewis for that, as well as for more pious reasons, had prudently excited him on to the holy war, and to secure the Christians' passage forth and back from pirates, proposed that they should take and garrison Tunis by the way. That stubbed elder then, sprung from old ground where the majestic oak of Carthage had in former times been fell'd, was now to be cut up if possible ; but by its filth defended, lasted still. A plague soon seized on the confederate army, of which thousands and ten thousands died ; and greater, more regretted than them all, the French Josiah. Like him in martial and pacifick virtues, like him in a life spent in learning and promulgating the laws of the most High ; not very unlike him in his death either, engaged in fruitless, uncommanded war. His son, though justly enough surnamed Philip the Bold, or Hardy, shocked at such a loss, and that of his brave brother too on the same day, was overwhelmed with unaffected grief, and resolved not to go further on a journey so unprosperous : although the town *did* surrender on conditions, agreeing to pay the king of Sicily and Jerusalem a fixed annuity of 40,000 crowns.

Theobald de Navarre, and William of Holland, were soon in the same mind for meaner reasons ; they gained some pillage, and thought so little about honour, that they resolved to draw their legions back ; but carrying the ill health of the country with them, died in a short time at Trapani, on their way home. Our Longshanks meanwhile struck his valiant bosom, and swore that he would enter Ptolemais in company of his armor-bearer only, if all the allies left him, ay, and the English too. His faithful and admiring consort, then big with child, *followed* his steps ; some trusty battalions *accompanied* them to Ptolemais, where had he not arrived *that very day*, the city would have signed capitulating articles. The prince's presence however, gave new life and vigour to the cause, he marched his few men to Nazareth, and took the town, killing 1000 Saracens ; whilst Lady Elinor, daughter to Alphonso, king of Spain, lay in, and called her daughter Joan of Acres, in allusion to the place of her nativity. Such were the exploits of this
young

young hero, that an *assassin*, dispatched by the Old Man of the Mountains, having obtained his confidence by frequent visits, for he professed himself a Christian spy, struck at his heart as he lay reclining on a day-bed; Edward's quick arm alert in the hour of danger, being suddenly raised, received the desperate wound; while with his foot he felled the intended murderer, and wresting the knife from him, cut open his belly. The bard in waiting, or harper, now burst in, and found our British warrior bleeding almost to death upon the body of the not yet expiring Saracen, whose life was finally finished by the minstrel.* To the dagger of this resolute assassin historians have added poison, and poets have represented the pious wife extracting from her husband's wounded arm a venom fatal to her own existence: but 'tis enough that Edward was so stabbed, recovered, and recalled to England, where the old king his father, and an infant boy left at home under female care, both died upon one day. Hearing this news so striking and afflictive, our gallant prince less naturally than truly, and with good sense exclaimed, that children of such a tender age were a loss easy to be repaired; but that parental tenderness could never be supplied by any future friend or servant, subject or son. The same post brought men and money for the holy war, 1000 marks I think from Scotland too, which had been invaded by the Norwegians with 160 sail, but those, brave Alexander happily dispersed, having baffled their leader, and retook the stormy Hebrides.

While now the eastern emperor meditated to make the long-sighed for submission to the Holy See, as best and likeliest method of confirm-

* And those who wish to draw a parallel between our Edward I. and Alexander the Great, will be pleased with relating how *Musicanus*, the minstrel of those days, offended that capricious hero, who massacred, in consequence, all the Bramins or Brachmans he could find, as Edward did so many centuries afterwards the Welch Bards; supposing their enthusiastic singing animated their countrymen to defence against invaders.—Shaers or Persian poets, even in the 17th century, wore a peculiar dress, as in Darius's time, and recited extempore verses in the *maidan* or market places, like Italian *improvvisatori*.

ing him in his so ill-obtained authority; a quick succession of popes, already mentioned, followed on death of Innocent IV. Alexander, who created not a single cardinal, for fear (said he) of increasing our domestick feuds; *Urban*, son to a French cobbler, who took for his legenda the words *virtus est sola nobilitas*; who vainly strove to quiet the fierce tempers of Manfred and Conradine, Richard and Alphonso: and who is better known to fame for having instituted the festival of Corpus Christi, in honour of a miracle transmitted to all Europe by the pencil of Raffaele, when some priest doubting the real presence in the sacrament, suddenly exclaimed and fancied that he saw, the consecrated wafer drop with blood. After these Clement IV. who had been a lawyer and a soldier, had acted as a page in Lewis the ninth's court, had been some years married, and had two daughters living, Mabelle and Cecile; for they and he were French, of a good family in the Narbonnois: his charming letter is yet extant, to his nephew Pierre le Gros. "Learn (says he in it) to be more humble than you have been; " promotion to the popedom is a burden, not an advantage to those " who understand it rightly: congratulate me not therefore, but obey " my commands, and dream not of gifts or preferments on account of " your uncle's advancement to the papacy, although I love you and shall " ever. Tell to your sister if she weds a *soldier*—Miletes; I'll give her 300 " crowns, no more: if any man, except a soldier, *nothing*. As for my " truly dear ones, bid them be good girls; Cecile has well bestowed " her heart I know, let her hand follow it! I shall despise her else; " and let no female of my name, Le Gros, meanly seek matches with " men far above them, leaving their own worthy sweet-hearts, because " marauding noblemen will strive to marry the pope's daughter." Readers will wish to see how all this ended; Mademoiselle Cecile's brave lover fell in a *private war*, and she retiring to a convent, died there. Mabelle set out with her husband for the Holy Land, but lost her life by a miscarriage on the journey. And though their admirable father's merit was greatly wanted upon earth for an example, heaven impatient

impatient to reward it snatched him soon away ; but not before Charles of Anjou did homage for his kingdom, being called Sicily on this and the other side the Pharos ; and these words used at his investiture gave rise to the well known style and title, *King of the two Sicilies*. He agreed at the same moment that his successors should hold their crown no longer than they were punctual in paying, upon St. Peter's day every year, 8000 *ounces* of gold to whoever was sitting in St. Peter's chair ; with a white palfrey, good and beautiful. There is a coin called an *ounce* at Naples now ; its value about a guinea or louis d'or : but these articles were signed in May, 1265, to the comfort of all who had seen the rapid strides made by ambitious Manfred, who was well known to have dispatched Prince Conrad, and half suspected of hastening, somewhat unfairly, his father's death, which was so ill accounted for and unascertained, that an impostor was publicly burn'd some years after it happened, for having personated Frederick with success in Savoy and other courts. The city bearing his name, *Manfredonia*, is however all that's left of *this* tyrant, who was at length assassinated by an earl of Rota, whose wife he had seduced or carried off by force. The death of Clement IV. happening not long after kept the pontificate in a sort of inconvenient state, not ill denominated abeyance, in which case remained likewise the western empire ; while the cardinals sat so long in conclave, unable to fix upon a successor, that the magistrates of the town until'd the place they sat in, but in vain. After three years more spent in fruitless and disgraceful contests which of them should be placed in the papal chair, the townsmen shut them up and kept them without food till they had quieted the minds of men and given the church a pastor : one only cardinal was absent, and *he* was pitched upon. When notification of the honour was conveyed to him, he was stepping into a pulpit at Ptolemais, the Christian rendezvous in Syria, and with a true Italian promptitude, changed his subject of discourse, and took his text from that verse in the psalms, which says, " If I forget thee, oh *Jerusalem* ! let my right hand forget her cunning ; let my

" tongue

“ tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, yea, if I prefer not *Jerusalem* in
“ my mirth.” Gregory X. did indeed keep the promise made that day
by Ubaldo di Piacenza, and soon as he arrived in Italy, sent stores of men,
money, and horses, to the holy war : having observed while in the east,
that the Greek Emperor Paleologus was well disposed to unite the two
churches and end the schism which had too long kept them separate ; he
without entering into motives took Michael at his word, and had the
comfort of hearing in a short time that the Nicene creed had been quietly
sung without objection, in the church of Santa Sophia at Constantinople,
whither the seat of empire had been once more fix’d and settled. Ro-
dolph of Hapsburgh now, descendant of the Gordians, and ancestor to
Francis II. in a right line, was patronized by this pope against Ottoca-
rus, king of Bohemia, who after much ado, at length consented to swear
fealty to his competitor, provided the function might be performed in
private : Rodolph consented, but at the critical moment a high and
unexpected wind blew off the canopy of that tent where the princes
were, and beating down the sides at the same time, discovered the Pan-
nonian chief on both knees before his *sovereign* and *superior lord*, per-
forming a vassal’s obeisance : enraged, and as his passion led him to
suppose, tricked by Rodolpho, he suddenly rose up and called *to arms* ;
some of his faithful followers attended, and the Duke of Austria hastened
to quell the revolt, which ended in an hour’s scuffle only, over the body
of Ottocarus, who lay pierced with a thousand wounds upon the spot
where he was seen in act of humiliation. Gregory grieved but little at
an event so favourable to the general welfare, and immediately con-
firmed the count of Hapsburgh in his new dignities, emperor of the
west, and duke of Austria *for ever*. The pope having thus made his
power respected, gave occasion likewise that his justice should be vene-
rated, by depriving Henry, the famous wicked bishop of Liege, whose
crimes stand recorded in a letter from Rome, exhorting him to mend
his manners ; such a heart however, no exhortations could reclaim ; he
was at length killed by a nobleman whose orphan niece he had vio-
lated,

lated, with circumstances aggravating even that offence, and Gregory generously absolved the nobleman, although to assassinate even a deprived bishop was in those days a sin extremely difficult to be forgiven. Another tale of equal horror marks this pontificate, and shows the state of society about the year 1272, which *Retrospection* must not let pass unnoticed. Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, who inhabited the Savoy, his palace, who called our Henry III. a liar, whose wild adventures and various exploits have served as the foundation of many a ballad, and many a romance, had two sons, Simon, and Guy; who after the well known battle of Evesham fled to Italy, and finding at Viterbo young Henry, heir to Richard earl of Cornwall, their's, and their father's enemy of course, being allied to the English throne so closely: they watched him to a church, and killed him undefended at the altar, during the elevation of the host. Edward, returning from Palestine upon his father's death, waited upon Gregory, with whom in Syria he had been intimately acquainted; and begged for vengeance on the bold assassins who had thus spilt the royal blood of unoffending Britain, adding the most impious sacrilege to murder: but Simon died before sentence could be pronounced, and Guy fled to the Aldobrandini palace for protection. The count, his father-in-law, when called to examination, satisfied all parties that *he* at least was in no wise privy to the deed. Pope Gregory then with severity as unaccustomed as the occasion of it was dreadful, drove Guy, like the first homicide, from man's society, rendered his descendants to the fourth generation infamous, anathematized whoever should receive him to their house, and laid whatever land he lived in under an interdict. With these proceedings Edward's grief and anger were appeased; he went home to take possession of his crown, and in due time forgot his valiant cousin's death. The pontiff then put himself upon a journey to Florence, where Gwelfs and Ghibelines battled in the streets, and cruel contest with its sharpest thorns choked the young germ of literature at its revival. To quell these turbulent, these tempestuous spirits, as he journied on upon his milk-

white mule presented by Charles of Anjou, in a close lane a human figure stood, half overgrown with hair, naked and wild, and stooped the astonished travellers. His right hand grasp'd a rope, his left a crucifix; while mute amazement held the march suspended—Guido de Montfort, *thus* (exclaim'd a voice) greets Gregory his persecutor; but take the cord and strangle, or the crucifix and bless me, for life's a burden I no more will bear. The venerable bishop alighting on the instant, and praying fervently to heaven for direction, would make a noble subject for a painter, to whom a contrast more sublime could scarcely be exhibited. *Retrospection* has but just time to see the culprit tranquillized, and sent to Sicily, where faithful Charles had orders to detain him, the interdict for that purpose being taken off, and the good patriarch of Aquileia was permitted, in his dying moments, to absolve him. A reconciliation 'twixt the Gwelfs and Gibelines however, was what appeared on trial wholly impossible. *Compefcuit ignibus ignes Jupiter*, said the Pope, and laid gay Florence under interdiction, though he himself delighted in the place, and meant to have passed some time there. Milan meanwhile was equally distracted; Torriani and Visconti there, tore each other's family to pieces, till after many years the latter at length prevailed, and the coiled serpent swallowing a child is yet the arms of Milan. The odd practice of borrowing devices from a conquered enemy, serves only to confound the antiquary, and distress the herald. Visconti had in the wars of Syria slain a Saracen of high renown, and prowess much esteemed, who had himself, or some brave ancestor, pulled out an infant from a serpent's mouth, and killing the vile beast, rescued its helpless prey from dangers not unfrequent in hot countries: but though our Christian warrior had, to commemorate his victory, taken the Saracen's impresa, and put on his own shield, propriety is violated, and enquiry perplex'd till the true tale is told. Candia indeed still gives the labyrinth of Crete as her coat armour, supposed the oldest in the world; and although such devices may be changed, crests have remained unalter'd even by the houses of Brunswick and Cologne,

Cologne, for example, as the horse yet remains with the first—the mermaid with the latter.

Our *Retrospection* has however been too long detained from Britain, where Edward hanged 200 Jews one day for altering and falsifying the king's coin. Hume says, his Christian spirit led him to tyranny, but 'twas no spirit of piety led him to another act which stained our island with its purest blood, and consigns his hated name for ever to all *poetic* curses. After ambition had excited him to enter Wales with unprovoked hostility, and with soldiers who pursued the brave possessors of sterility from rock to rock, resolving that no shelter should suffice to save, what could produce no benefit when once obtained; he determined to tear from them even the pleasures of memory, the sweet recollection of what once they were; and fraudulently assembling their bards in Conway castle, there massacred the unresisting recorders of excellence, the living registers of piety and valour, forgetful how to the faithful minstrel's hand his vital pow'rs were owing. Against this cold-blooded cruelty towards men respected, so that they sat next the princes at a feast, and had their harps presented by a royal hand, for whom the cup-bearer poured out in his king's presence the sweet metheglin from a gilded horn, to the health of departed heroes: against the mean murder of these guiltless bards, fit plan for souls unsoftened even by music, let *Retrospection* next contrast a scene exhibited in the south of Europe: where John of Procida, and Peter of Arragon, who had already drowned his own elder brother with their father's consent, resolved to drive from his seat as king of Sicily the pope's tributary prince Charles of Anjou and Maine, who was at this time on a visit to Martin IV. at Rome, wholly unsuspecting of the meditated conspiracy. Constantia however, daughter to ambitious Manfred, delighting to revenge her father's cause, and set her husband Peter on the throne, heard with complacency the horrid tale, how on the bell ringing for vespers upon Easter Tuesday evening 1282, a general and inhuman slaughter of all the French upon the place began, but ended not till

3 A 2

midnight

midnight. With such unbounded rage the fierce Italians leaped upon their prey, that in those few short hours throughout the island, 8000 human creatures, women and infants, noblemen and vassals, fell a sudden indiscriminated sacrifice to faction and confederated fury.

When we are told that Charles was seized with paralytick stupor on hearing so dreadful and unprepared-for an event; no reader of the story can be much surprized, but some perhaps will wonder that Pope Nicholas, immediate predecessor to Martin, and successor of Adrian and Innocent, who came to the papal chair on death of Gregory, should have been capable of giving his consent to so enormous and horrible a transaction, only because being a man of mean extraction, he had sought to give his niece to Charles of Anjou, who replied “No, no, though Gaetan d’Ursino *does* wear red slippers now, and people kiss them—his blood shall never mix with mine depend on’t.” This incivility however, this poignant and superfluous reproach, cost him the loss of crown and dignity; separated the souls of 8000 helpless French from their defenceless bodies, loaded with heavy guilt the consciences of many clergy, who lent their aid in these tremendous scenes, but never would have lifted under the bloody-banner without their vindictive sovereign’s approbation, and gave to lasting infamy the narrative of the *Sicilian vespers*.

For these occurrences so full of guilt and horror will Straßburgh steeple, 580 feet high, make us any compensation? A little it will, by shewing that *some* men must have been employed in somewhat less mischievous than throat-cutting: although no nearer method was found out to induce the wide district of Lithuania to prefer the Catholick religion to idolatry, than the old mode of forcing them into our pale by the valour of the military Christians. Till some such close-clapt summary as this be presented to a modern reader; he does not easily figure to himself that paganism was so near us in days when Dante sung and Cimabue painted, when Guido di Colonna wrote his *Historia di Bello Trojano*, whence in much later times our

Boke of Troye pillaged a multitude of incidents, mingling Arabian ornaments with Grecian fable, to the confusion of antiquarians and annoyance of common readers. While Vasco de Lobeyra wrote his far-famed *Amadis*, the laughing stock of this age, but much more justly the admiration of that in which 'twas written; when a mirror of manners very little exaggerated, was held up for amusement of such who, tired of truth's uniformity, delighted as now in fiction; but felt their pleasure arise from exalting their imaginative powers to somewhat above humanity, and not as we do in some modern novels, seek in the depression of our reason, the entertainment of a dreaming fancy.

Taste certainly did in its early culture, for want of skill in the agricolist, run all to seed as soon as 'twas out of the ground, and science was already grown so faucy, that when Taddeo the celebrated physician was called to the sick pope from Florence, he asked, and Trithemius says, that he received one hundred crowns o'day, besides a present when the cure was perfected. Some change in the value of money however, must necessarily have taken place, for we see Edward allowing his prisoner, the earl of Murray, twenty shillings per week, when in the beginning of his father's reign, the primate of Scotland had sixpence per day only allowed him in the same situation. Our fraudulent, though valiant sovereign, having now pacified the Welsh with solemn promise of a prince born in their own country, and of an innocent at least, if not a virtuous conversation, sent his queen Eleanor of Castile, to lye-in at Caernarvon castle, and then shewed them the royal infant as future *Prince of Wales*.

Swift says, and says very sweetly, that "*Wisdom's above suspecting wiles*;" and conscious valour naturally softens into sentiments of loyalty at sight of high birth with harmless loveliness combined; soliciting protection, and ensuring obedience by smiles that must of pure necessity be genuine. The first-born son of England from that hour, has been acknowledged as our *Prince of Wales*. Meantime the king tried to subdue or cheat his Scottish neighbours, while feuds and
broils

broils between the Bruce and Baliol parties scourged their whole country with domestick war, and prompted them to acquiesce in Edward's arbitration. That he should coldly give a false award, tells meanly of such times, and shows that the old adage *dolus an virtus*, still maintained its ground in certain hearts, while chivalry, with its nonsensical affectation of honour, did little towards purifying men from those base passions which will cling to some of us, in spite of education or descent.

It will however be proper to recall *Retrospection* to that field, where Charles of Anjou called out Peter of Arragon to single combat, soon as recovered from the *attonitus* occasioned by his people's massacre. All sovereigns then protected a *campo-franco*, or free-spot, where to decide questions by the sword: and this was appointed in Gascony. The challenger and judge appeared *before the moment*, but he who did the wrong lingered till the time was past. Pope Martin's ideas of honour being hurt by this conduct disgraceful to knighthood, as sincerely as his good heart was shocked by the strange murder of 8000 innocents at once: deprived Peter of his dominions so obtained, and set the island up for sale or contest, according to the genius that in those days prevailed. Poor Sicily was now again deluged in blood—a general crusade having been set on foot against Constantia after her husband's death, for steadily, against the pope's consent, maintaining her son James upon the throne, till a marriage between Iolanta, daughter of that prince, and Robert, great-nephew to unhappy Charles, settled the crown upon their offspring's head; and left on Europe no effect of the Sicilian vespers, except that frightful waste of human life, which was too little then an object of consideration. My wonder on reviewing of such scenes, is chiefly, that Europe was not totally depopulated: the *Annales Fuldenfis* do indeed relate, (resolving not to be outdone by Polish wonders) that Margareta, countess of Henneburg, brought forth 365 children all at once, like the queen ant:* and this

* Among the *termites bellicosæ*, mentioned by Smeathman.

remarkable

remarkable occurrence is attributed very seriously to the bitter curse of a pregnant beggar; but natural philosophy was at a low ebb, while other arts made such surprizing progress, that Tafi had already set up the very beautiful mosaick work over St. Mark's church, Venice, which one would think was then completely civilized, did not we know that manners yet were regulated even there by the old Lombard code, making a man pay three crowns if he so beat a servant *wench* or a fine *mare*, that they miscarried in consequence of the cruelty. So much more flow of growth are morals than mechanicks in this world: and if such restraints were needful in the more delicate divisions of Europe, *Retrospection* will scarce wonder to see rough Ladislaus dragging his rude opponent Oldamir around the field at Pest, not like Achilles at his chariot wheels—but by the *locks* held in the hand of his vanquisher, who shook him up in air from time to time, glorying in brutal strength before two armies A.D. 1290. Bonfinius regrets indeed, rationally enough, that such gigantick powers of body, should be wasted in exertions of sensuality, and clogged by gluttonous excess: but even the good pope's repeated exhortations, all were lost on this unheeding animal; he died among the women he confided in, leaving the crown to Andrew, surnamed the Venetian, whose grandfather returning from Syria, wedded a daughter of the House of Este, and Stephen her son by him, connecting himself with the Morosini family, brought gentler manners into rugged Pannonia, where Andrew swayed the sceptre peaceably, softening his court with cantadours and violars, and polishing his people by degrees.

Andronicus the emperor in the east, meanwhile who blinded and imprisoned his brother John, only because the people said they loved him; after his first wife's death, married Irene, widow to Paleologus, who being attached to her first husband's children, lost the heart of her second, by too much care for their advancement: and Andronicus, chiefly to spite *her*, and shew contempt for *them*, created Ronzerius a
common

common pirate—Cæsar; by this step offending all mankind, and drawing on himself a war in which the Turks were constantly victorious. This new race of wanderers, for so the name of Turk implies; whether originally Scythians or captive Jews, lost to all gazer's eyes when Pſalmanaffor carried many away and kept confined in Media, as Knollys thinks, who seems to have thought much about them, were first known to us as Turks, when Tangrolipix was called in—fatal auxiliary! after which event, Mamalucks and Saracens, caliphs of Syria, and sultans of Egypt, fought under their hot sun, which still renewed the flames of fierce dissention half a century. Neither mogul nor grand-signior, nor cham of Tartary however, could quite succeed in ought, except a general depression of Christianity, which daily lost ground in the east, as if to show mankind that very strange phænomenon which no one could have credited, had he not seen, for union is recommended by theorists of every age, who tell us 'tis invincible: once it appeared on earth—never *but* once; the grand crusade exhibited a *union* of compacted millions pouring forth from kingdoms, provinces, districts—the phalanx of the west: yet, all which that strange aggregate performed, was so perpetually, so miraculously counteracted by treachery and feuds, by accidental distresses on our part, and by that valour which none have ever yet denied the opponents on the other, that Syria, after all our efforts, all our conquests, fell into and remained in their hands near to 200 years after Godfrey de Boulogne made his grand exploit. The conquerors could not however, as they then proposed, conquer the world and keep it: metals once separated from their ores, may defy chemistry herself to make them any more amalgamate; the arsenical particles completely *roasted out*—oil, earth spirit and salt, maintain their several stations, but never can be made cohere again. God had expressly declared by his prophets, that Rome should be the last nation indulged with enjoyment of universal sway, and *Retrospection* may observe, that *she* had now for the second time,

past

past the precise point or summit of her power: when Boniface VIII. of that name, and 190th bishop, in his quarrel with Philip le Bel king of France, received from *de la Flotte*, the French ambassador, a strange and striking reply; his Holiness during a conference maintained by that nobleman with what *he* thought an unbecoming spirit, threatened to *cut off*, that was his expression, from the body of the church, such as would not instantly acknowledge her dominion.

Your sword (replied the malapert Frenchman) is only verbal and figurative, I believe, but ours is *real*, and is *sharp*. The wary pontiff, who had not as 'tis supposed arrived at his high dignity without some frauds practised on his weak-minded competitor Cælestine, wished to call in assistance from men's *feelings*, when he perceived their *interests* opposed him; endeavouring to strengthen authority by influence, a trick not tried by sovereigns, till the first gives indication of certain, although distant decay. An old visionary was therefore, perhaps, introduced about this period; and in the presence of the pope, told how the Blessed Virgin had appeared to him, soliciting her own removal, and that of the holy-house where she had born her son, from Bethlehem, which was about to be profaned by musfulmen. The pope sent messengers into the east, and soon proclaimed the arrival of our Redeemer's mother, borne by angels, as 'twas said, then through the air, and set down near the habitation of Lauretta, a pious lady, living on the Adriatic shore of the Romagna. That place has from that day been venerated with presents, and looked up to with pious awe for 500 years exactly; the figure was set up in 1296, and and in 1796, was torn away with insults Ottoman never would have added—for Mahomet's followers revere blest Mary as parent of a prophet sent from God, though they deny her crucified son's divinity. When Rome then gave some sign of approaching change, what wonder England felt the spirit of emancipation!—The story of Edward sending the earl of Norfolk on some errand, and his refusal to go, is urged as proof of the spirit being kindled—but that tale is *no* proof

on't: the barons knew their power long before, and it was now (like the pope's) beginning rather to weaken;—"Sir erle Bygod*, you shall go or hang—By God, fir king, will neither go nor hang," was our king's speech to him, and Norfolk's answer; fir erle and fir king were common expreffions—all were knights, and as fuch *equals*; according to the gothick fyftem, fhewn in France when Clovis requested a vafe from out fome plundered city, and a chieftain sprung up, fwearing he fhould have nothing but what fell by lot; fhewn in Spain by the Aragon oath of allegiance preferved to us by Antonio Perez†, where the nobles fay to their fovereign,

“*Nos que valemós tanto como vos, os hazemos nueftro rey e feñor—*”

fhewn again in England when Henry confirmed *Magna Charta*, and fwore to obferve its contents as *he was a gentleman, a king, and a knight*. The change in Europe's fyftem firft appears when Edward, unable to compel the barons' obedience, yielded to their demand of a new charter, fecuring our nation from further taxes without confent of Parliament. By parliament *they* meant a congreff of nobility; but the fubtle prince, as a new check on *them*, encouraged the boroughs to fend up fome deputies, who would of courfe be firmly attached to *him*, and give a willing fupport to his authority againft thefe haughty barons bold and free, who living nearer, opprefs'd fmall folks more than any king could have temptation to. Edward found out therefore, on this occafion, that what concerned *all* fhould be approved by *all*; thus bringing a new maxim into play, which has of late carried men more lengths and greater, than the wifeft of thofe days could have wifhed, hoped, or feared.

Discoveries indeed are feldom made by virtue. The improvement adopted at the time I am writing by every common fire engine thro' Great Britain, was firft contrived by a boy ten years old, whose bufi-

* We muft remember the man's name was *Bygod*; without that there's neither joke nor quibble.

† Sec. to Philip II.

ness 'twas to watch the communication of the boiler and cylinder, opening and closing the same with his hand alternately. Of this charge however the lad being soon weary, and wishing rather to go out and play among his young companions, very wisely fastened a string from the handle of the valve to another part of the machine, where he had observed a correspondent motion: the valve then performed its office without manual help. *He* gained his *amusement* by losing his *livelihood*, and mechanism obtained a valuable improvement. When kings called in their commons to controul the nobility, they foresaw the end on't no better than the boy did. Meanwhile luxury increased prodigiously in this reign. Witness an act of parliament commanding gravers and cutters of stones for seals to give due weight in gold: witness too the *amusements* of the court, while deputies were fetched from the country to do our nation's *business*. Roger de Mortimer, knowing the king's taste, gave him a magnificent and martial show at Kennelworth in Warwickshire, whither one hundred armed knights with their ladies were invited, and all that romance could dictate was devised for their entertainment.

Banieres ils avoyente cointee et parée
De or et dis sur toutes exchequereè,

says an old French poem. King Eric of Denmark had some time before given a match of martial sports, as it was called, at Rostoch, where cavaliers came from all parts of Europe to an incredible number. The Dane's caroufal was famous for the drinking horns, and loud repeated healths of their numerous and brilliant dames aroused the midnight echo. One French knight, renown'd for prowess, was absent and was missed: he was employed upon a great adventure.

Henri de Navarre died in 1274; and his only daughter Joan, by Blanch d'Artois, niece to St. Louis, was now thirteen years old, and many disputes arose concerning her education at betrothment. Two kings, Arragon and Castile, prepared to seize her; but the courageous

queen, supported by this one brave knight her kinsman, carried her daughter off by mingled fraud and force, bringing her safely, after many perils, into her own country, where in due time she married Philip le Bel, then fils de France only, and by those nuptials added Navarre to the French crown; for Philip the Hardy had been long dead of a malignant fever, the seeds of which it was supposed he brought from Syria, where similar putridity still taints the air. His sepulchre was lately to be seen at Perpignan, where he died, having rescued Gironne from Peter, the prince in whose favour was made the massacre of the Sicilian vespers. This king of France had given to his son Philip the Fair, when dauphin, an Italian preceptor of the *Colonna* family; so called because his ancestors had, in the first memorable crusade, rescued the column to which our Lord had been tied. Against this noble house however, Boniface VIII. had set his face completely; and great, and gross, and bitter was their revenge; exciting powerful enemies against the See, till such and so great were their conflicts and disturbances, they at length broke the pontiff's heart, which would not bend even before so rough a storm. "Since I am betrayed (said he at length) I will die at my post;" and putting on the old crown presented by Constantine the Great to Pope Sylvester, awaited the tumult in his papal chair. If it *can be true*, that when the enemy seized Boniface so attired in the Vatican, *Sciarra di Colonna* struck him on the face; it may be true that the same nobleman, upon the pope's restitution to dignity and power, disguised himself like a galley-slave, and worked on the sea three years to avoid the fierceness of his foe's resentment, from which no then known nation could have protected him. Although the papal seat, as erst the imperial, shewed evident symptoms of its being somewhat shaken, when Boniface issued his bull prohibiting princes to levy without his consent any tax or impost on the clergy, Edward of England openly scorned the command, and outlawed those who refused contribution, saying, if they would not lend assistance to *his* government, they should have no protection from it. He proceeded therefore

therefore against the priesthood, as some of the emperors had in old times proceeded against the Christians; doing justice to every body against them, and for them no redress against any possible injury. The Archbishop of Canterbury, for example, was robbed and beaten upon the highway; the delinquents were not prosecuted. Hume rejoices in this contrivance, as Gibbon does in that of Dioclesian, it was (say they) a species of martyrdom so mortifying to spiritual pride. It was indeed: but historians should recollect, whether rulers will or no, that when the church falls the state will not long remain behind. Edward tried the same virtuous method in Scotland too, denying the benefit of law or security for their estates to all who refused him fealty. But Sir William Wallace, great patriot hero! ill-requited chief! colossal in size, intrepid in spirit, and for personal bravery renowned above his fellows; undertook the Scots deliverance from an insidious tyrant, who detaining their lawful king in his own camp, and relying on the weakness of his unsuccessful rival, pretended that he was guardian to a nation which he had tricked by false awards when they had committed themselves to his decision, as arbitrator for their crown and dignity. Against a character so selfish and unfeeling, this Caledonian warrior's wonderful and ever disinterested exploits might well detain our *retrospective* eye; but it would soon shed tears for his hard fate. Edward returned from Flanders flushed with victory, and ready to dispute nearer possessions with a wilder foe. He soon, by dint of discipline, defeated Sir William Wallace, who, vanquished and taken prisoner, was shortened of his head on Tower-hill.

The non-submitting spirit of the Scots revived in Robert Bruce, son to the competitor of unwarlike Baliol; and our military monarch, though he added policy the most refined to a disposition naturally valiant, was forced to die, and leave them unsubdued. Disease drove him from life's large theatre at sixty-nine years old, when like Camilla he might have said,

*Hætenus acca soror! potui; nunc volnus acerbum
Conficit, ac tenebris nigrescunt omnia circum.*

I am:

I am disposed enough to think with Hume, that the crusades undertaken in early, and fought after in maturer years, by this active prince, were less inspired by religious zeal than by desire of that martial fame, *field* honour (he possessed none in civil or judiciary transactions), which mark the manners of a sanguinary age. This spirit so bewitched the Comte d'Artois in the year 1300, as I think, when Philip le Bel gave battle to the English and Flamands near Courtray; that he proposed to Ralphe de Nesle, his constable and kinsman, a *brave device* of galloping forward and breaking the enemy's ranks. The other gently advised reconnoitring; but *no*: invoking *Dieu et sa belle*, according to the fashion of the times, this fool-hardy youth rushed forward on the instant, making an immense dust on that open plain, and hiding from his own eyes the broad ditch behind which a corps of Flemings had taken post, and which received his brave detachment to their ruin. The troops with one voice crying out *Ha! Ha!* when they saw count and cavalry all crushed together in a concealed fosse; the memory of this incident has been perpetuated till this hour by the French name of a funk fence *Ha! Ha!*

And now Europe, amused by advent'rous deeds of fearless individuals, reflected little on those hot convulsions which had so broken up the whole continent into small separate parts. Still less were its inhabitants aware, that after the fierce spirits once began to cool, commerce would with her gently flowing lava connect, though distantly, each fragment with the other, till all our neighbouring states cemented, not united, should at length form a sort of turbulent republick, rough, not free; and saucy still, but never independent, from that hour when trade, though of a coalescing nature, shewed each its consequence to all the rest; and put into the mind of every share apart, that application to enrich *itself* which has since given to the signories of Europe an air of purse-proud self-sufficiency.

In Asia meanwhile, Ottoman the first, son to Ertogrul, and father to a new and formidable empire, assumed the style and title of Sultan in the East; fixing his seat of dominion at foot of Mount Olympus, regardless

regardless of the Greek emperor and his new Cæsar, who bargained with them for his worthless sovereign, now serving merely as a mark for scorn to point the slow and moving finger at; "till all Natalia soon revolting from him, sunk into misery of its own creating:" and this new power rose, in the scripture language, from the sea, or universal aggregate of all things, a new devouring beast, unconquered yet, though many times confined.

C H A P. XXI.

FROM A. D. 1300 TO THE YEAR 1350, OR NEARLY SO.

THE Emperors of the West have scarce engaged our *retrospective* eye since Rodolph, who liked Italy so little he would never go thither, because he had observed, he said, that those who went there merrily disposed, seldom returned home otherwise than sad. His own employment at home was no unuseful one: he destroyed sixty castles of the Brabançons, a sort of semi-noble and lawless banditti, whom the sovereigns had till his time in some sort encouraged, at least connived at, hoping they might prove a kind of check on the aspiring barons, that in each land thwarted the king's authority. This generous prince, disdaining such auxiliaries, tried to extirpate them entirely, which must have been no small step towards general civilization; not long retarded by the pope's choice of a Polish bishop for the see of Strasbourg. This prelate coming to Vienna, called for some ale, and being offered wine instead, swore he would go home again, *and so he did*. But Mentz boasted a more polished superintendant of their religious concerns. When Rodolph died, whose loss was long felt and lamented, the bishop's influence got them to elect Adolphus of Nassau, and Albert of Bavaria refused him fealty: our Edward sent him a large sum of money, for having accepted which, as well as for sacrilege and adultery, he was dethroned and slain by Albert, the worthy and warlike heir of Rodolph, who never would consent to pay him homage, and at whose coronation such was the crowd, that the Duke of Saxony slipping his foot, fell, and was trampled instantly to death. His son married Blanche, daughter of the French king: but an occurrence calls our *Retrospect* to Spain, where Lewis had lately taken Gibraltar from
the

the Moors, and was considering himself as happy in that event, when his eldest son suddenly accused two of the younger ones, positively swearing that he knew the time and place, and could prove they had imagined and contrived their sovereign's death by forcery. The princes summoned Ferdinand to appear before what was then called the tribunal of Christ, and challenged him to judgment by the cross, a ceremony instituted first by Charlemagne, and already described in this book. Ferdinand accepted it, and went in good spirits to rest at his usual hour, but rose no more, being found dead in his bed, though without marks of violence next morning. The accused brothers went into a monastery, and the good king died in ten days of grief and terror, appointing for his successor an *infant* in the cradle, Alphonso XI. who reigned forty years. The royal children have in Spain been known by name of *infants* ever since.

The gentle Benedict meantime, maintained the papal dignity at Rome, while he forbore all claim to pomp or pride as individual. He was a man of merit, not of birth, and when, on his accession to the popedom, his mother came to court in robes of gold tissue, with ornaments of jewels blazing round her head, to him who introduced her he turned round and said, "My mother is no princess; guard this lady home again: my mother, I know, will come to-morrow morning: she has more sense than be in all this throng." She had in effect sense enough to take the hint, and waiting upon his Holiness next morning in her accustomed dress, Benedict ran to meet her, and threw himself into her arms with affectionate transport, requesting her to pardon what he had done as a duty due to his situation and to himself the day before.* When this amiable pontiff, by intriguing

* Gregorio Leti relates this same tale of Sextus Quintus and his sister Camilla, but without probability; for he established that lady a palace and a court, and delighted much in advancing his family—a thing studiously avoided by this humble-hearted Christian, whose character was opposite to that of Sextus V. in almost every particular.

courtiers, was removed by sending him a basket of envenomed figs, Clement V. whose active reign was filled by a variety of strange events, found himself forced to set a sort of crusade on foot against the order of Knights Templars, meant in their original institution to keep peace and protect pure religion, but who, by various crimes, had so disgraced their order, that to repress and punish them sufficed not; it became necessary wholly to destroy them. A council for this purpose was therefore held at Vienna, and I believe the pope returned to Italy no more. He was a Frenchman born, had a strange horror of Rome's Mal Aria, and was the first man who resolved to change the see's place to Avignon. Upon his journey thither the large carbuncle dropt out of the tiara, and could never more be found. This was considered as an unlucky omen by his Roman courtiers, but the memory of such an accident was soon effaced by his triumphal march from Lyons to Avignon, on which road the King of France led the Pope's mule five miles on foot, the crown and fleurs de lys upon his head. When that ceremony was ended, Charles de Valois and the Duc de Bretagne took the bridle by turns *bare-headed*, while Philip followed first of the train on horseback; and 'twas in this state that Bertrand de Gouth (so was Clement called before his pontificate) entered his native town of Avignon.

The progress of Turcism in the east however, having been accelerated by the mad conduct of the Knights Templars, an expedition was soon made to Syria, where Philo, cousin to the weak Andronicus, had happily saved Rhodes from being a prey to Ottoman. That island was therefore consigned to Hospitaliers, a new order, and fifty delinquents of the old one being dragged to Paris, were there burned alive,*

* Of these knights certainly strange tales were told, and stranger punishments suffered by them. Two that were roasted alive challenged Clement V. and Philip le Bel to meet them in our Saviour's presence on a given day. This appeal was loud, distinctly heard by all, and both these princes dying close to the days prescribed them, many hearts were smitten, and many ideas of cruelty mingled with the fear of a Templar

Their phrenzies, whether exaggerated or no, were soon forgotten; whilst Italy, being become a nearer theatre of horrors, occupied men's minds in that period, and claims from us in this a glance of *Retrospection*.

'Twas in or about the year 1312 when Henry VII. crowned at Milan, at Pisa, and at Rome, reigned a short time, and that most turbulently; burning Brescia, dismantling Cremona, and causing the prince bishop of Liege to be slain, with no fewer than two thousand followers. To these excesses more would have been added, but that a monk of Benevento, by a new deed of adventurous wickedness, poisoned him in the sacrament. Louis of Bavaria and Frederick of Austria were now both of them crowned by adverse electors, while Gwelfs and Gibelines eagerly taking sides, increased the slaughter of these fierce contentions, and left one thousand lives upon the field. Venice indeed having been interdicted by the pope for calmly looking on while such scenes were exhibiting, of which her nobles were accused beside of taking cruel and mean advantage, resented this act of power in the popedom: they had already seized forcibly upon Ferrara, and now affronted by their city's interdiction, rose against Clement's nuncio in a rage, excited by the senate, which tried not to appease them, till Rome's ambassador was obliged to run from what he called the refuse of her empire. The papal army however put itself into motion, headed by Cardinal Pellegrue, a warlike Frenchman, who at Francolino defeated the republican troops, retook by storm what they had lost, and killed six thousand Italians in Ferrara streets, forcing the inhabitants, generals, &c. to acknowledge themselves vassals of the Holy See, and recognize the Pope as universal lord in temporal, as in spiritual authority. To hinder the Venetians from forgetting this their duty, Clement commanded them to send him Francesco Dandolo,

pler in men's minds. Pennant thinks their wealth was their worst crime; but I fear some gross excesses were committed. It has been lately urged that the free-masons of the present day derive somewhat from these people; but the researches into deep iniquity afford less information than disgust.

their doge, to Avignon, where he was chained like a dog under the pontiff's table while he dined. That ignominious ceremony finished, the quarrel was made up, and the kiss of peace bestowed. Clement's death following closely upon these events threw our whole continent into new convulsions, more if possible than did the demise of his great anti-predecessor Boniface, whose memory Philip of France very officiously contributed to blacken, without being able to substantiate the charges against him.

But Carpentras now witnessed disgraceful scenes indeed; where, while the cardinals were disputing within doors, all fast confined in conclave, their domesticks, adopting the prejudices of their masters, quarrelled, fought, and at length fell to plundering houses belonging to rich men, shopkeepers in the town; some vowing vengeance against French, some against Italian partizans, till the dead bodies lay heaped about the streets, which catching fire by squibs flung about, the flames reached that palace where the electors were shut up, so that it was with difficulty they escaped. Lyons next, appointed to decide the dangerous question, *Who should be pope?* had at last the honour of choosing John XXII. celebrated by Petrarch as a man whose business was devotion, and whose pleasure was study. His first care was to compose the German dissensions, which had so torn the western empire into pieces; while Lewis and Frederick contended for the sway. Finding however that gentle means would have small effect on such fierce spirits, and that distraction seemed to threaten Europe on every side through their vexatious feuds, John fairly told them they were *neither* of them emperors, and named himself vicar of th' imperial throne.

Sanuto, a subtle Venetian, now informed the pontiff that a new crusade would be the only method to unite all parties against a common enemy; but John listening a while, soon found his sole motive towards a holy war was bringing treasures quite enormous into Venice, the commerce of which state rendered already but too formidable a city, lately become the central point of trade, and likely enough to make herself

herself the focus of dominion. This son of a French vintner therefore felt no natural desire to aid intents or mercenary projects formed by Italian states. *He* saw with pleasure his court fixed at Avignon or at Carpentras, and meant to turn his arms 'gainst European hereticks, he said, regardless of oriental infidelity ; which in the year 1320 flourished under protection of resistless Ottoman, to the complete undoing of our work in Syria, where some sad exiles from their native land were doomed to perish, forming the scarce-lamented or even remembered remainder of those multitudes which had inundated the east two centuries before, a deluge now dried off. John XXII. had however, in order to conciliate those who repined at the See's translation, as it were, to France ; sworn solemnly while he was yet cardinal, that should the Holy Spirit chuse him pope, he never would mount horse or mule but for the purpose of being carried to Rome. Desiring, notwithstanding this vow, to be crowned, and to reside constantly at Avignon, he went by water to his coronation ; and stirring from that town no farther than his legs would bear him out and home again for nineteen years together, kept his oath. Italy's improvements meanwhile depended not upon the court of her sovereign ; she had her artists now, and underneath the pencils of Taddeo Gaddi and Buonamico detto il Buffalmacco, painting had made incredible advances. Besides that, while English, and French rhymists too, shook the ears and eyes of modern readers, Petrarch and Boccacio continue standards in elegance, and shew that Florence had nearly reached the goal before they had arrived at the first marking post. More than that, before the year 1350 no fewer than one thousand citizens of Genoa appeared in *silk* robes ; when if *our* poor kings or queens had one dress of such precious materials made up for their coronation only, it was instantly laid by with the other regalia for days of pomp, and entailed forward to the successor with his crown and jewels. Dramatick powers likewise halted behind most strangely. The spiritual show in the beginning of this fourteenth century, described by Vasari as a prodigious exhibition on the

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the Arno, must necessarily have been a very gross and very tedious pageant, representing hell and the whole story of Lazarus called by our Saviour from his grave. 'Twas at the jubilee celebrated by Boniface some few years before, that the fraternity of Gonfalone amused all Rome by giving the passion of our Lord as an entertainment, where a live man was exposed naked on the cross, and a beautiful *Magdalen* weeping at his feet in the open square, caused great and shameless indecorums. Why plays should linger so long, after novels like those of the *Decameron* came in familiar use, I know not: but Boniface had his mind occupied with other cares than those for poetry and the fine arts. He apprehended some abridgment of that power to which he had been chosen guardian and protector; and in order to attract notice from exteriors, while yet exteriors might recall attention, he decorated the old custom of granting indulgencies upon the last year of every century, with all that splendor and gaiety could perform: and 'twas his having *two* swords carried before him in procession that day that offended Philip le Bel, as he knew perfectly how they were meant in allusion to the *spiritual* and *temporal* command of Rome over her subject world; whereas *he* broached the doctrine more agreeable to princes, that *they* ruled by divine right alone, and held their crowns from none but God Almighty; transferring the majestick claims of monarchs on whose heads heaven had indeed laid the bright burden at our world's commencement, to their inferior sceptres barons and dukes, such as the ancestors of Philip were, warriors and chieftains merely, gothick leaders of banded multitudes their vassals; for Clovis, founder of his petty throne, pretended to no more, when curbed and thwarted by his equals in degree, even at the hour he was inaugurated.

Clement V. however, a countryman and creature of the King of France, forbore the bearing of two swords to please him, and in return Philip, without objecting, led his horse; willingly giving up to the vanity of a short-lived individual what he steadily refused to the
pride

pride of that individual's office and high station, which was no longer recognized as sovereign over a willing world. And we may here observe, that whilst John XXII. a learned pope, the successor to Clement, was writing upon the state of departed souls, and whether those who left the world worthy of all praise, should or should not see their Redeemer before the resurrection; Ockham, an English cordelier, controverted *his* power over living princes, from whom of course the controverter began to receive encouragement, and soon obtained the name of the *invincible* Doctor. His works were full of wit and subtlety, learned from his master Scotus, whose acumen baffled those he could not convince, when he disputed against the followers of Thomas Aquinas, called the eagle of theologians by Romanists to this day, and of whom Warburton says "that he was a truly great genius, the same in
" those blind ages for divinity that Friar Bacon was for natural philo-
" sophy. Less happy though in this, that he soon became surrounded
" with deep glossers, who never left him till they had extinguished the
" radiance of that great light which had pierced through the thickest
" night of monkery, the thirteenth century, when the Waldenses were
" suppressed, and Wickliffe not yet risen." But although taste and learning now revived apace, and Giotto, Cimabue's favourite buffoon, took up his master's pencil when he died, delighting to tell all mankind how he was taken first into his service; by having chalked a drawing of some lambs while he kept sheep on Cimabue's paternal estate, and cut some beasts in turf upon the mountain, like that on Whitehorse Hill going to Bath. It was his honest drollery, more than merit, which interested nobles and ladies in his favour. Giotto had struck by chance upon that least valuable branch of the painter's art, deception; and when Cimabue was from home, he drew a fly upon the picture of Benedict ninth's nose, and jumped about for joy to see his master go to blow it off when he came into the room again. The story of his tying up a live man to a cross when he was about to paint the crucifixion, was a trick worthy Giotto; and when the pope threatened

threatened him with punishment for endangering a fellow creature's life so, his drawing a dirty brush over the work was in the same vein of humour; he knew the sovereign would pardon, and set him to do it all over again.

The marble church we travellers all admire, now reared her head at Florence; but will not outlast the fame of her contemporaries Dante and Petrarcha; though architecture suffered not her sisters to leave her far behind, while those twin geniuses Nicola and Giovanni Pisani left to the temple they were baptized in, a pulpit, yet existing, though finished the last day of 1304, ornamented with allegorical and devotional figures, to a perfection that might astonish a civilized, much more a barbarous age. That the verses on it should be no better than they are is scarcely less surprizing.

Laudo Deum verum per quem sunt optima rerum,
Qui dedit has puras hominem formare figuras.

But we must turn our telescope towards Britain, where commerce yet ill understood, as Hume says, cramped (by an act of her expiring sovereign) the Lombard merchants Frescobaldi; and under a pretence that the exchequer had been robbed, drove many of them away. The son who succeeded to the throne however, made his brave father soon and sincerely regretted. Elegant, not warlike, and possessing more delicate beauty than becomes a soldier, Edward of Caernarvon was little disposed to enter lists with Robert Bruce, and to maintain those ill-gotten provinces which once acknowledged Longshanks for their liege. Our prince however was observed to prize in his first favourite Gaveston, that bravery he boasted not himself. The gay Gascon came off conqueror in every tilt and tournament: graceful as Paris, valiant as Troilus, and insolent beyond endurance of English nobility, they therefore planned and accomplished his banishment, but after a few years thought it not worth their while to hinder his return. The king, who had long pined in secret for his company, met him at Chester; melted to
tears

tears by the very first embrace, the cordiality of which ensured his ruin. Guy earl of Warwick, in a short time seized on and dragged the hapless youth to his castle; and near that spot where he received the final blow, a stone yet stands perpetuating the baron's triumph. Edward soon comforted, sought his next minion among the sons of those very men who had opposed his early choice; but then Queen Isabelle objected, and that loudly, running to her brother's court, Charles the Fair, with her complaints: she had said nothing while his and her own countryman Gaveston had possession of all that England could bestow. Hugh Spencer, on the other hand, who had lamented his king's strange propensity towards favouritism, whilst it was all heaped on a foreigner, found it not ill conferred on his own son, whose avarice, no less than Gaveston's pride, disgusted all the rest of our nobility.

Lewis Hutin and Philip the Long, who had in turn succeeded to the French crown after their father Philip le Bel, were dead; and Charles their younger brother willingly took up his subtle sister's quarrel. Edward endeavoured to oppose the invaders; while the populace being let loose plundered London, and massacred every loyal subject who supported, or even wished to support the king's cause, proclaiming young Spencer a public enemy, and joining the lords in a general cry for his extinction.

Against the royal family itself, followed by 3 or 4000 armed rebels from abroad, against the barons' power and the people's cry—no personal courage, no treasures could prevail. The victims of this uproar, Spencer and his father, were savagely murdered, and their bodies thrown to dogs, while the wife who first deserted, next invaded, and then dethroned her husband, lived in notorious intimacy with Roger de Mortimer, of ancient family but infamous character; who in some former riot had broke prison and followed Isabelle to Paris, where she first placed him amongst her son's attendants, when his betrothment to Philippa of Hainault took place at the French court in 1325, although

the prince was then but thirteen years old I think ; and the intended bride but nine. Edward meanwhile fought 'mong the mountains of his native soil, an unfound refuge. Wales, by mere instinct, refused her protection to a sovereign given in contemptuous cruelty to a country which yet had too much virtue to insult or to betray him. Hunted however by the earl of Leicester with fatal skill, *his* vassals found and carried him to Kennelworth, whence he was driven forward to Berkeley castle : there the vile fiends of power forced from him shrieks that betrayed the horrid deed—*not new* ; for such had been the meed of many a wretch belonging to the odious court of Heliogabulus in early times, and such in nearer days the fate of Godfrey duc de Lorraine, uncle to the far-famed Godfrey of Boulogne : when Thierri, by the aid of Robert recovered Holland and killed the bishop of Utrecht. But we must follow up the gentler destiny of Isabella and her worthless Mortimer, now pampered with indulgencies arriving nearly to the same excess as those so momentarily enjoyed by Gaveston or by Spencer, till the young king, uniting maternal energy of mind with the accomplishments paternal resemblance had conveyed, resolved to rule alone, and rid the land alike of female influence and tyrannick favouritism ; he seized the earl therefore in his mistress's apartment, tried, legally condemned, and struck his head off, confining the queen-mother to her country-house, where she enjoyed the liveliest and the most innocent of all delights—hearing her son for many years extolled by every rank of men, yet not forgetful of her loved companion, called the place *Mortimer*, after the name which she preferred to Valois or Plantagenet : the name remains to it still. Generous and just, beneficent and brave, upon our young king's princely character would *Retrospection* dwell for ever, and still for ever find new themes of praise—but such a summary as this waits not for episode or for reflection. Coarse facts which show progressive civilization will not however be unwelcome—queen Isabella had an allowance *then* of 4000l. o'year, and when the elder Spencer's larder was given up to pillage, it contained

contained 600 salted hogs, as many sheep, and 80 carcases of powdered beeves. Stowe tells us in his Survey, that the earl of Leicester's annual account with his cofferer, was 7300l. of our present money—the expences of the wardrobe not included. Possessions were concentrated then in England, as now they are perhaps in Transylvania: and I should feel myself little amazed, if in Prince Esterhazy's larder, something like this gigantick plenty might have been found in 1775; but our tired eyes must cross the channel now, and observe Charles IV. upon his death-bed—he who protected his sister Isabella, and who refused the pope's grant of the western empire. This prince leaving his consort pregnant, settled a regency for his son, if he should have one, otherwise confirming the succession to Philip de Valois his first-cousin, whose father was Charles de Valois, brother of Philip le Bel, by the beautiful Joan of Navarre, and who, although father, son, brother, uncle, and first cousin to a king—never was king himself. The royal widow produced a posthumous princess, and upon the head of Philip VI. was the French crown of course most righteously placed, according to ancient usages, confirmed by the testamentary disposition of expiring Charles. Our Edward alone refused to acknowledge him, and fitting out a navy of 240 ships, saw himself despised by the new king of France, who stationed 40,000 men in 400 vessels, to prevent the English invasion. Our troops and sailors were however so completely victorious, that ten of the enemy's ships alone remained: while Froissart owns the loss on our side so small, that no man dared report the news at court—and Philip's fool was the sole person who had courage to let his sovereign be truly acquainted with the sad disaster. Our king encouraged by such vast success, began the siege of Tournay, and in the true spirit of chivalry, hurled his defiance at de Valois' head, challenging him out to single combat, and felt perhaps this martial mood more irritated by the French monarch's angrily reminding Edward, how he had once done homage for the duchy of Guienne, and that 'twas contrary to ev'ry rule for a *liege lord* to duel *with inferiors*;

but adding, "That if he would increase the stake, and set his island on the combat's issue—the challenge might in honour be accepted." These reciprocities of empty insult were put an end to by interference of *Jane*, countess of Hainault, mother to Edward's queen, sister to Philip. The pope dispensed with her request on this occasion to quit her convent and its habit. She came arrayed in royal splendour, Froissart says, and with her beauty, elegance and wisdom, *charmed* those too fiery spirits into peace.

Th' enchantment was not indeed of very long continuance : another lady, more powerful perhaps, because more young—lighted the flames of war once more in Europe. The countess de Montfort finding her husband imprisoned and oppressed by Philip, fled with her infant son to England, soliciting assistance from our warlike sovereign. Beauty in those days never solicited in vain : he sent her back with troops she well knew how to use ; on every trying, every dangerous occasion ; the countess charged her enemies on horseback, surrounded by knights devoted to her service, and when confined in Henneborne by Charles de Blois, till gallantry itself was wearied, and began to think of yielding up the town ; mounting a high tower, she descried the English fleet—"And now no more capitulation, no more cowardice, no more debates," exclaimed the voice of female fortitude from off the walls, where she contended for a son's, an infant son's succession. "They come—the succours are arrived," she cried, soon as they were in sight. Henneborne heard, and her grave magistrates swore to endure famine till our victorious admiral sir Walter Manny should arrive indeed, and open their unhappy city's gates to plenty. Five hundred chosen archers next followed the courageous countess in a sally, timed with consummate wisdom ; our British hero stormed the place meanwhile, crying, "May I never be beloved of my heart's mistress, if I right not this beauteous dame !" Charles and his armies were soon beaten back—the lady accompanied sir Walter to her castle, and kissed him in face of all the troops, says Froissart, *comme noble et vaillante dame*.

'Twas

'Twas this fir William Manny that fir founded the Charterhouse (Chartreux in London) for twenty-four Carthusian monks—*whence the name*. He had fir bought the ground for a burying place in time of pestilence, then not unfrequent. He afterwards built a convent on the spot. When monasteries were dissolved, a Mr. Thomas Sutton purchased it for the charitable use it is still put to ; giving for it 13000l. 1000l. an acre : for the original ground was no more. Such circumstances and such actions, fix the *retrospective* eye, but had no influence on the fate of Europe, unless perhaps by whetting Edward's appetite to seize the throne of France for ever, abolishing the salique law. Domestic disturbances might with more prudence and propriety have called him back to London—but London was safe in queen Philippa's care, who had repelled one Scotch invasion in his absence, and was again prepared to give her dangerous neighbours a reception they little dreamed on, though so well deserved. The prince of Wales too, England's glory, England's heir, then half adored, yet unforgotten among us—he suffered to go learn upon the continent, to earn his spurs and emulate his father.

Philippa had more sons than one—all heroes. The eldest signalized himself so at the battle of Cressy, though a youth, that at the engagement's close, our martial monarch leaped into his arms, scarce able to articulate "*Mon fils, mon vrai fils, digne de l'empire du monde.*—My son, my true son, worthy to rule the world." Upon that bloody field, in fact—fell the whole flower of the French nobility, and their king, ill denominated Philippe le Fortuné, was borne forcibly from the battle covered with wounds. Retiring he saw the blind Bohemian John, exposing his venerable person in defence of the House of Valois : "When even the blind remain," exclaimed Philip aloud, "Why will you drag *me* hence?" "*Because we can see,*" calmly replied his brother John of Hainault, and guided the king's courser to a place of safety.

The Scots during this period, had recalled David Bruce, long banished, who had married the late king Edward's daughter. Robert
was

was dead; and sent his heart under the care of Douglas to Jerusalem; whither he wished, but was unable to go. The faithful messenger assisted Arragon against the Saracens, and willing to retain memorial of his expedition into Palestine, bore from that day upon his shield *a bleeding heart crowned*;—the arms of Douglas to this very hour.

The incursion through Northumberland to Durham, was notwithstanding stopt at Neville's Cross, where the queen met, vanquished, and made David prisoner; then seeing him safely lodged within the tower, hastened away to grace her husband's camp, where all that military splendour could effect, was put in use for her reception. Edward was at that instant besieging Calais, and the brave governor's expostulation with Sir Walter Manny, stands on record in all historick annals. The high heroick fervour of the times inspired six self-devoted burgeses to claim the meed of dying for their town's deliverance; when marching up to Edward's royal tent bareheaded and barefooted—ropes round their necks, and the keys of Calais in their hands; our sovereign would have taken their forfeit lives, had not his lovely consort, new-arrived, made their forgiveness her sincere request: and given the eye of *Retrospection* a sweet pleasure; the sight of fortitude and female interference triumphing over pride and barbarous policy—for honour in those days was still supposed to rest in *noble* bosoms only—and Edward half-hated these gallant burgeses for stepping into lists marked for high birth alone. In proof it was not their resistance that provoked him, when in a future contest for that city, Eustace de Ribau-mont* stepped forward in the field, and fought a dreadful duel with him hand to hand; after his conquest, Edward invited the bold youth to supper, and threw a string of pearl about his neck: bidding him present that to his fair mistress as an acknowledgment of his vast prowess, bestowed by England's king. Things were however silently and se-

* Eustace de Ribau-mont, when he gave up the struggle—called aloud to *Edward*,
“*Sir knight, I yield myself your prisoner.*”

cretly in some parts of Europe; openly and madly in some others: working round towards a new modification of its government. During the *last* portion of the circle round which our world had run for near *five thousand* years, and the last half of the *sixth*—not far off: monarchy, properly so called, had degenerated; and had been overthrown. Even the haughty baronial aristocracies were in the fourteenth century passing their meridian. The commons were obtaining wealth in England, and wealth (excepting in despotick* states) leads distantly and unsuspectedly to power. The popes had been opposed in their authority, and Boniface's character was even openly accused of imposture, simony, and crimes of blacker dye, which had been patiently endured in person of his predecessors: who at worst felt the censure fall upon *themselves*, not on the see, deemed till these later times impeccable. But money now was necessary to a pontiff, and John XXII. left behind him eight millions of our present sterling pounds—to him Benedict the XIIth succeeded, a gentle inoffensive character; and of his successor, Clement de Rosiere, is related, the tale how when he was a travelling monk, he had been robbed and stript upon the road: but a charitable priest passing by, took care of him, and supplied all his wants. "How shall I ever make you amends, dear sir?" says Clement—"Oh, oh!" replies the other, laughing—"Make me a bishop when you become pope, to be sure." The event he thought impossible came true; and la Rosiere was no sooner inaugurated, than he looked out his old and worthy friend, and made him archbishop of Arles.

Neither virtue nor money however, were sufficiently powerful to repress enquiry, or to blind detection. Ulric the Dane had written some letters wherein were mentioned the beast with seven heads, the woman sitting upon seven hills, and various other texts terrible in

* By *despotick* states I mean such as Turkey, where wealth is dangerous and not desirable.

their nature and consequences, during the reign of John XXII. who tried, but could not silence the murmurs which slowly, but certainly gathered in the wind. The Lollards made themselves remarkable in 1328, and wit lending his assistance to sharpen the arrows of learning, delighted to see Dante on the now popular side. In a diet at Mentz, it had been solemnly concluded, that the emperor held his right from God alone, and that a council was above the pope. The aristocracy which had long ruled the states of Europe, by this decree gave signs of intention to engross the church authority likewise, while the fierce schisms between popes and anti-popes, which in past times excited a spirit of contest merely, now appeared half-ridiculous to many, and perfectly and rationally offensive to all mankind. The removal of court residence to Avignon, was a preparatory step to all that followed, and the ignorance in which Rome had desired to detain her religious votaries, was now likely to prove dangerous to that religion's original seat—when Nicola, a mean citizen, was found almost the only person who could read, and explain the antiquities of the place, old epitaphs, &c. by studying which, he heated up his fancy to endeavour at restoring the old form of government, and was a formidable meteor for a moment. Mr. Gibbon has expatiated on the five years bustle made by this man, known by name of the place he was born in—Rienzi; but 'twere superfluous for an epitome like this to notice it, except as a proof that all were glad to see the cardinals Colonna and Ursini trampled on, and murdered with some shew of justice by a mean demagogue, whom they were likewise glad to see displaced again and banished, when count Minorbini restored things to their pristine order, and Clement VI. justly so called, poured the oil of tranquillity upon the swelling surges of rebellion. Petrarch, romantic in his love and ardent in his patriotism, assisted with even more than good wishes, this ill-conducted attempt at innovation: his far more reasonable, as more humble hope, was by his poetick eloquence to recall the bishops of Rome to their see, which seemed to be neglected

glected now by them as it was erst deserted by its emperors, the previous and remote, but certain prognostick and cause of its decay. If things do not go forward they recede: it was no longer high tide with the papal power. A diet held at Franckfort had decreed, that any bishop might crown the emperor as well as the pope: but what the ecclesiastick authority lost, the regal sway sought to procure for itself—in vain. The kings got nothing yet but such empty splendour as would have been justly derided by their ancestors, bold barons, who led embattled followers to the field.

Arts, sciences, elegancies, conveniencies, comforts, luxuries, *really* increased, and spread over Europe their softening, and at the same time their dissolving warmth. The first offspring of commerce, *curiosity*, sprung from the union she had made with learning on her late visits to the east; turned over with restless fingers leaves she could not yet peruse in the vast book of fate, and drove enquiry forward; nor could the strange calamities which depopulated Europe stop, except perhaps for now and then a moment, her rapid course: although five thousand souls perished in an inundation that overspread Holland, while the earl and countess amused themselves by seeking out a giant and giantess which they were told had amazed the surrounding provinces, and obliging them to marry, took them in their train to the marriage of Philip de Valois who lost the battle of Cressy, and who first laid a heavy tax on *salt*, inducing our Edward to call him le Roi du loi *Salique*, a regulation he had no small interest in wishing to overturn and to deride.

Things were beginning to give signs of a distant change in favour of the commonalty. William the Good, who made an advantageous peace with Flanders, obliged his governor or bailiff of South Holland to pay one hundred crowns to a poor woman whose only cow he had taken from her by force; and then beheaded him for having by that cruelty reduced her to want bread, and so submit her daughter to his ill-endured careffes. A century before this she would have obtained small

redress by appealing to the sovereign; but now the peasants began to find protection under a higher power, from the immediate and pressing tyranny of the nobleman next them. The Turks meanwhile, under victorious Ottoman, pressed forward, nor did his death relieve the Christians so completely as they hoped for. Orhanes took Nice by stratagem, and wasted the fine islands of the Mediterranean sea, seizing on Nicomedia, and at length marrying the daughter of Cantacuzenus, tutor to helpless John, son of the old Andronicus, who sat in Constantine's seat indeed, but was unable to poise the sceptre; while his false but powerful preceptor associating himself with his pupil, seemed as if selling the city to Orhanes, now become son-in-law to the Greek emperor. Gregory, surnamed the *authentick* doctor in the schools, tells us how a horse painted on the walls of the palace neighed three times at Constantinople this year, and well might he neigh at such news! The patriarch's excommunication of those who made this impious marriage, was disregarded as much as the dumb and painted steed: Venice alone ventured to attack the prosperous infidels, and the Venetian fleet was beaten at the Bosphorus. The Genoese, who always wished to thwart their immediate rival, joined with the Turk to tease her: Lewis king of Hungary called her attention homewards by his encroachments, and Solyman, son to Orhanes, repress'd their ardour in the east. Venice herself was shaken by a tempest. Her annals now record how fancy saw St. Mark, St. George, and the protector of babies St. Nicholas, uniting to sink a huge ship loaded with devils which were coming forward to destroy her. The great hall at Padua was built about this time however; for nothing retarded taste in its progress; and our Edward instituted, with martial pomp, the order of the garter. Learning saw her universities spring up on every side, and that of Pisa will be long remembered. Petrarch had been crowned in the capitol at Rome by the pope's vicar some few years before; and that trade might leave some lasting monuments of *her* improvements, the famous tun of Heidelbergh was constructed; although pestilence and locusts,

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and other national evils, were strangely depopulating Europe. The world was even yet slow to consider these calamities as unconnected with blame; and the wretched Jews being always at hand, upon whose shoulders to lay every imputation, many were put to death under pretence that they had poisoned the waters; had men accused them of felling old clothes, stolen or purchased from infected houses, they had perhaps been nearer to the truth. But a Jew doctor, less discreet than greedy of immediate gain, had in the year 1339 undertaken to cure John of Bohemia, whose unhappy blindness had come upon him by degrees, a cataract perhaps, or gutta serena, which by the awkwardness of his unskilful though precipitate operator, was so increased that light was wholly lost. We have seen upon the plains of Cressy that his courage yet remained: not so the common sense of all his courtiers, who falling on the unsuccessful practitioner, hewed him in pieces, massacred many of his tribe, and drove the rest completely out of their dominions. On the king's death in battle his son Charles IV. was chosen emperor by some of the electors, who deposed Lewis of Bavaria, and broke his heart. No competitor rising except the Marquis of Misnia, *he* was bought off by a sum of money, and Bohemia consolidated as part of the western empire in person of this Charles; whose marriage with Anne, daughter to Count Palatine of the Rhine, extended its limits. About this time too the famous William Tell produced the freedom of Switzerland, by one bold though not original act of steady courage, when Grissler, governor of those provinces for the emperor Albert, had commanded him to shoot an apple set on his son's head. Tell remonstrated a while, but at length complied; and Meichtol his historian says, that Grissler observing in his hand a second arrow, asked its use. "For your extirpation," replies Tell, "had I been so unlucky as to have killed my son." I think the very first insurrection in the cause of liberty saw this tyrant fall by a shot of the same quiver.

Lewis of Hungary maintained his independence however, and

fought to obtain Naples by invasion. The pope would not endure to see such bold injustice, and protested that the plagues which desolated our continent, especially those caterpillars by which every green leaf in Hungary was eaten, proceeded from that wickedness which marked a degenerate age. Clement made peace, and by so doing gained Avignon for himself, annexing it to the Holy See of Rome for ever. He had before offended all the world by purchasing that town with money and flatteries from Joan the wicked Comtesse de Provence and Queen of Naples, who strangled her amiable husband Andrew in a silk thread of her own twisting. I think 'tis Collomefius that relates how this unhappy prince, coming to her apartment, said to her fondly, "How are these pretty fingers now employed?" "In forming a rope worthy to hang a king," said she laughing; and in effect that very night while he slept, she had the heart to slip it round his neck, so that he never spoke another word. The body being thrown out of a window in the city of Averfa where they then resided, Joan wedded her new flame the beautiful prince of Tarent, whom she permitted to die a natural death, consumption killing him in three years time. James of Majorca was her next consort; but him unfeeling interest soon beheaded, under pretence of jealousy, says Fuller: but it was haste to associate Otho of Brunswick, who adored her so, although then past her prime, that he solicited her hand with ardour equal to her own, and ventured upon a solemnization of her fourth dangerous nuptials. Her charms however could not operate against heroick Charles, poor Andrew's nearest kinsman. He vowing vengeance for his uncle's murder, and hoisting a black standard besieged the city of Dyrrachium, so gallantly defended by Otho, that thousands of lives were lost in the hot contest; beheld with agonizing anxiousness by Joan; who encouraged her brave defender from the walls, till breathless with his wounds, he looked up to the mistress of his affections and expired. Charles seeing this occurrence, cried out *Peace!* "Throw me (said he) the bright but impious cause of all this bloodshed

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“shed from her tower, and let fair Italy be healed from its fierce anguish.” Some pages to her person took his word, and threw the guilty princess from the battlements, when sadly contemplating her husband’s corpse: “Sure *never*, said the victor, did a knight so valiant combat in the cause of so truly vicious a lady.” She fell like Jezebel of old, and was, like her, devoured by the dogs. Her death, which happened in her forty-eighth year, restored the world to peace; and though the event happened five years or more beyond th’ intended limits of this chapter, I could not bear to keep so horrible a tragedy from its catastrophe—told in such various ways, but ending always with the merited extinction of such a character; whether effected by suffocation or poison, by an assassinating hand, or by the Tarpeian method, as I have chosen to relate it.

CHAP. XXII.

ENDING WITH A. D. 1400.

THE death of Philip de Valois marks the year 1350. He was surnamed the Prudent and the Fortunate; but neither sagacity nor good luck could enable him to make head any longer against the superior genius of Edward III. whose second attempt on France was but delayed, not set aside entirely, even by the contagious sickness which Stowe tells us dismissed fifty thousand souls at once from the city and environs of Norwich, an assertion which we will rather relate than investigate. A *retrospective* glance like ours affords no time for calculations, which are ever unfavourable to round positions confidently maintained. The plague in England certainly lengthened our suspension of arms against France, and that kingdom had a moment's time to breathe under their new king John; while Peter the Cruel, who succeeded in the same year to the throne of Castile, made Europe ring with his enormities, worthy of pagan days and Roman emperors. He married Blanche de Bourbon, and drove her from his palace the fourth morning after their nuptials, in a manner disgraceful to *knighthood*, say his contemporary historians. Her successor was the infamous Maria de Padilla, who lived with him as a mistress; but Jeanne de Castro had the misfortune to be his queen, and felt *her* days endangered by oft-repeated poisonings. His brother Frederick, who counselled other conduct, next fell a sacrifice to his vindictive fury: so did the great officers of state, and not a few prelates of the church, particularly the good archbishop of Toledo, who mildly and heroically had admonished him from the pulpit. That Christianity however might not be polluted
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by such a character of sanguinary despotism, Peter renounced it; joined with the Moors to waste his own dominions, and provoked his nobles to take up arms against him, under the conduct of Henry de Tristemar, his father's natural son. Peter now fled to the protection of our Edward, who wished to reinstate him in his dominions: but mankind would be no longer ruled by monsters; all ranks of people deserted the standard of avowed impiety, and some advent'rous cavalier or baron saved the imprisoned and perishing queen Jeanne from her dungeon to die at her father's house, in consequence of those cruelties which she had suffered during her long confinement. Though somewhat out of place, we won't lose sight of this insufferable sovereign till we see him, after five battles bravely fought, beheaded at length by Henri de Tristemar, who thus revenged his mother's death 'mong many others, and ruled in lieu of Peter on the throne; but died soon after he had freed Spain from her savage tyrant.

From such scenery our eye turns, not ill pleased, to Turkish Orchanes, happier in his native disposition to do good, and flattered by his son Solyman's ready obedience to a loved parent's order. Equally fired by ambition to extend their dominions, and carry their crescent's honour into Europe; returning, though late, the visit of the invading crusaders, 'twas agreed that the young man should explore the most agreeable situations on the other side those limits which had till then confined the Turks to Asia. Such was prince Solyman's behaviour that he conciliated many Europeans to his interest, and such was his valour that he awed the murmurers into obedience. Confiding in their kindness, or at worst secure of their acquiescence, he took up a temporary residence among them, and diverted himself with innocent amusements, till hawking at a heron one day, his eye fixed on the quarry, his horse fell with him, and broke his neck upon the instant. Orchanes, as might be expected, died of grief; and Amurath, surnamed the Great, reigned in his stead. *He* fixed his seat of empire at Adrianople, and was the first institutor of guards about his person picked from

from male infants required of Christian parents for the purpose, and called Janissaries, a name well known and formidable since that period. Amurath made peace with the Greek emperor at his accession, and sent two hundred of his subjects to assist the Thracians in erecting a pillar at Didymotichos, now Dimotuc. These traitors managed so well for a month, that the unsuspecting Christians requested fifty more. With these picked men the Sultan resolved to possess himself of the city; and having placed an ambush of valiant Turks near to the suburbs, the workmen pretended a quarrel among themselves; then leaping suddenly upon the warders of the armoury, who were at supper near the castle gate, seized weapons more in number than were wanted; and having given the signal to their companions without, begun a fierce assault and took the town. It has belonged since that day to the Ottomans, although Amurath underwent many and bitter reproaches for the treachery, which he took care to lay upon his general Chafis, and offered the Europeans his head. They were more clamorous for reinstatement than revenge however, and insisted upon having their city again; but the proud Sultan told them then, “That where truth had been once propagated by the followers of Mahomet, error should no more return to plant her thorns.” And to confess the truth, our Christian cause derived no dignity from its professors in those days, when the Genoese, ever ardent to gain all the trade of Asia to themselves, and diligent to distress Venice, who was pursuing the same plan, were base enough to help the Turks against us, and even assisted Amurath to possess himself of Phillipopolis, now Filiba; so deeply was baseness rooted in the world, even at a time when romantick ideas of honour pushed to excess, prevailed over its most enlightened continent.

Fausto the Italian relates many ridiculous tales of chivalry exercised during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; but when military orders were first instituted, they had not always employment *in their profession*; and 'twas not much amiss that young nobility, armed, mounted, and

and provided with 'squires, did for amusement, or else in consequence of some religious vow, wander about the semi-barbarous countries seeking adventures, which the state of things in such wild times did but too often afford them. Rich heirs were not seldom forcibly conveyed away, that another more distant kinsman might succeed; while women were perpetually made the tools of avarice, or instruments of ambition, against their own consent. The oath of installation which these nobles took, obliged them to liberate such captives, and to redress such wrongs: when laws afford no protection the military *must* take up domestick quarrels, or still more dreadful scenes, and cruelties inspired by revenge will follow. Thus private wars, which had desolated Europe, seem'd as if dropping into desuetude, when rapine and insult began to expect due punishment from single hands, and when he who committed the violence no longer engaged all his relations to support it, but rather preferred answering the charge in duel, or shrinking by flight from the disgrace of refusal.

But every institution, however laudable, degenerates: what once was virtue faded into folly; and commerce regulated morals before the manners could prevail upon themselves to change. Gay amorous knights, warm in the cause of innocence and beauty, began therefore, when real occasions presented not, to offer voluntary combat in defence of qualities which cannot be ascertained by victory; and risked their lives, that futurity might acknowledge one lady more lovely or deserving than another. Not content even with *this*, another century saw what was now but empty vapour degraded to absurd and poisonous mischief; so that when legal ties grew firmer, and females of nice honour had fewer opportunities of imagining their delicate sense of it in earnest offended, the young and idle cavaliers, who burned for combat, carried their fighting humour to such a laughable excess, that some would go about with a company of damsels on palfries along with them, and used to stake one against his opponent, whom he fought for purposely to prove their mutual valour. Some letters of

defiance have been recorded, but would in this chapter be out of place, as they belong somewhat to a later period. I cannot however resist inserting *this*, knowing it to be genuine.

“Not out of envy to your glory, Sir, but from desire to share it, I beg the favour of you to fight me, and am your most humble servant.” *The reply was*—“Pray, Sir, dine in my hall to-morrow, and see my court-yard: we will meet at two o’clock and examine the lists; I attend you after the banquet to victory or death.”

Can madness or fatuity go further? This disposition was however parent of many books, which kept up the echo when the sound and fury of the ideot tale was past: Don Quixote had the honour of finishing it for ever.

What chiefly may be learned by the use of *Retrospection*, is to observe, that wisdom as seldom cures folly as virtue dislodges vice. The first runs itself out of breath, and stands still only because it can drive forwards no further: the last is, I fear, never eradicated at all, but hunted down in one shape, escapes like Proteus under another. As a proof, Pope Clement VI. successor to Benedict, was obliged to suppress the sect of Whippers or Flagellants about the year 1350, because of the gross improprieties committed under this pretext, while he supported another order which gave offence to the rich cardinals, &c. in consideration of their care of souls during the time of pestilence, from which, when all secular priests and bishops ran away, some *Franciscans* remained on whatever spot was seized with infection, doing their duty towards sick and dying; many of whom, struck with a sense of gratitude, and deprived by death of all near relations, left to that order their estates or money; and ’twas this conduct which occasioned complaints disregarded by Clement VI. Of this pontiff much has been recorded good and bad, but all agree that he was wise and learned. My readers and myself should love a man so partial to *abridgments*, that he caused many great works to be epitomized, “that the *busiest*, he said, might not be ignorant of what had chanced before their own times.”

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The Canary Islands being discovered during his pontificate, Petrarch tells how he appointed Lewis earl of Clermont king of them, styling him Prince of Fortunia, and crowning him with his own hand: as the day proved rainy, our Italian poet puns and quibbles about the *watry domain*. Such however was the superiority of Italy to England, both in point of literature and general knowledge, that when our ambassador at Avignon, hearing those islands were bestowed upon a Spaniard, he fell into an agony of passion, thinking the pope had given away England and Ireland; and difficult enough was it to persuade him that any except the *British* isles could with propriety be termed the *fortunate* ones—a better testimonial of his patriotism than of his geographical skill certainly; tho' we must not forget, that in a very few years after this event, 30,000 students were enumerated as appertaining to our university at Oxford. What they were studying indeed did not immediately tend to any purpose of benefiting this life, or obtaining happiness in the next: for notwithstanding scholars had left off disputing, and fools forbore to investigate their arguments, concerning the nature of the holy and incomprehensible Trinity, they wrangled in the days we are describing, whether, if one angel could stand upon the apex of a pyramid, many might not stand there too, and *how* many? This, though more innocent, was scarce less absurd than the recorded controversy of the same times, whether God best loved in his heart a possible spirit of great dignity, or an actually existent insect of the meanest and minute kind?—Science however, if she did walk along angular paths, or in a serpentine direction, kept walking forward in every country. The king of Hungary was a good astronomer, so was the Genoese master to Boccacio. Prague and Cracow boasted a university, and Cantacuzenus, the Greek emperor, undertook a history of his predecessors, at least some of them. Higden and Mandeville grace our English annals; and although towns seem to spring up more slowly, we see Stutgard enlarged by John, the first elector (as I think) of Brandenburg. The year of jubilee was that in which Philip of France died, 1350: Clement VI. would have it pompously celebrated; but the people mur-

mured at Rome's rapacity : and as not above one in ten returned alive to their own houses, those few returned thither in ill humour, relating how travellers and pilgrims were plundered in the grossest manner by the Italians, who sold their food and let their lodgings at a price few could pay, so that rich people only could see the reliques, or partake the blessings held out to them as an inducement to flock thither. When once it had been said that absolution's self might be too dearly purchased, a keen observer could have descried, that by unforeseen and scarcely noticed occurrences, the way was preparing for Wickliffe.— This great man had, during the reigns our *Retrospection* has ran through, been employed at Oxford in carefully watching the moment fittest for his broaching doctrines not yet unlocked. He saw that they would now be not unwelcome to a large portion of the Christian world : he told them therefore what they till then had scarcely dared to tell themselves, that the Romish church claimed her supremacy to others under no better than false or feigned pretences ; that Christ bestowed no temporal power on his apostles, and that he had expressly disclaimed riches and honours for himself ; that prelates offending against God and man by their corrupt and wicked lives ought not to be protected from punishment by the vestments which their vices sullied, or the profession which their principles profaned. He fulminated predictions of ruin to those, who in defiance of our Saviour's precepts, strove for the highest place, and he taught how every king should be head of his own realms, independent of ecclesiastical authority, which extended no farther than spiritual matters ; and shewed that auricular confession was insisted on only for the purpose of extending church power. Wickliffe had seen the blessed sacrament administered in both kinds to Philip king of France, to Joan his queen, and to John duke of Normandy their eldest son, by virtue of diploma from Clement VI. in the third year of his pontificate ; the date, Avignon, 21st June 1344. The French monarchs have since that time availed themselves of this privilege at their coronation and at their death ; but this new reformer found out that popes had no just right

right to restrain *any* person from partaking the blood his Saviour shed freely for *all*. These opinions published abroad, won the hearts of many who groaned under papal and priestly oppression; and several princes caught the new flame, lighted indeed from that small inextinguishable spark which had remained warm in the world since the Waldenses, and after them the Lollards, with indignity, but without adequate effect, had been trodden down.

John of Gaunt, heroick Edward's son, saw, as 'tis said, his father's death approaching in an illness which many years preceded it—he was, if not aspiring, at least turning his thoughts towards the crown of England, and he avowed himself convinced by Wickliffe, who found so many powerful protectors, that the pope was accounted wise in punishing him only by command of perpetual silence: although Gregory XI. was no pusillanimous character. That he removed the see back from Avignon to Rome, although himself a Frenchman, nephew to Clement VI. is a proof of his good sense; he saw the necessity of residing at the centre of his dominions: the dreadful schisms had, by starting up in various places, probably reminded Gregory of the old Prince in profane story and early days, who planning a removal of his royal court, a trusty favourite begged leave to bring a dried ox's hide into the chamber, and threw it down: then standing on it at the four corners alternately, observed he could not keep it to lie quiet and steady; but fixing his position in the *middle* of the skin, he shewed the king that none of the parts were *then* disposed to start up and be troublesome. In short, prudence became now a necessary qualification to the pontiffs. Urban, the *last* pope intermediate between the two of the family de la Rosiere, had exerted that quality with regard to John Palæologus, the Greek emperor, who came to Europe and submitted his opinions in theology to Rome, uniting as far as in him lay the long separated Greek and Latin churches. He had married Helena, daughter to Cantacuzenus, and Orhanes the Turk had taken her sister into his seraglio—his death however, and the succession of Amurath as sultan,

sultan, gave the Christians little hope of mercy. Those who resided in Servia were all driven out, while the Grand Signor, so he began to be called by the Genoese, increasing in power and wealth by conquests almost incredible, tore all the districts of Thrace and Mysia from their original possessors; took Gallipolis, defied the prince of Bulgaria to single combat, rallied his new militia of apostates round his person*, chastised his insolent bassas, put out the eyes of the rebel prince young Aladine, who had abetted their seditious spirit; and after personally gaining thirty-seven battles, and marrying his favourite son Bajazet to the daughter of Jermenogli, died in the year 1390, and was succeeded, as he wished to be, by the furious youth celebrated, or at least consigned to long remembrance by Rowe's delightful play. 'Twas at *his* wedding that Eurenoses sent as a present one hundred beautiful boys, as many girls, the first eighteen, the last fifteen years of age, all richly dressed, each with a cup in hand containing of some rarity: gems, spices, pearls, worthy so great a sovereign's acceptance; while poor Constantinople, in a miserable state as Rome was under her last emperors, looked tamely on to see who next would invade, or who protect the fading purple—once so venerated by mankind, but now scarce an object worthy general compassion, when weak Andronicus went into Asia, a willing pensioner upon the Turkish court, leaving Emanuel, who succeeded Palæologus, as a kind of tributary sovereign tied to a post no longer tenable, and feebly feigning to support a sceptre which daily shrunk from grasp of Christian princes. Among all these, England with justice names her own the greatest. Incomparable Edward's triumphant success at Poitiers over John of France, who inherited his country's prejudices against our island with his predecessors' obstinate valour in defending his own, settled those disputes which the cardinal de Perigord vainly attempted to compose before beginning of the combat.

The young hero's behaviour when he brought his royal prisoner to

* The Janissaries.

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that tent where victory sat on his brave parent's head, arrests, well-pleased, the *retrospective* eye, which sees, upon that memorable occasion, displayed all those delights that valour and virtue can either exhibit or bestow. Our Prince of Wales, warm with ideas of duty due to exalted rank, and full of tender feelings for dignity in distress, waited himself behind his captive's chair, while John in return, reposing upon his heroick foe's high sense of honour, willingly accompanied the English conquerors to London, where we read of his dining with our city magistrate, who had invited to meet him, David king of Scots, taken by queen Philippa—and her consort, Edward himself, first among the sovereigns of his century. Many gay tilts and tournaments were shewn in honour of such guests: a solemn challenge, thirty knights against thirty, was given and accepted, and the count de Beaumanoir cried out aloud—" *It should be seen that day who had the fairest mistresses.*" 'Twas seen indeed when only sixteen of the whole sixty combatants were left alive, and they *fore wounded*, says Knyghton. Yet 'twas to this spirit of chivalry we owed the gallant conduct of our Black Prince, so named, I think, from the colour of his arms in war: he married his cousin the Fair Maid of Kent, who brought him only one son and died; but among all the annals of mortality, none so affects an English heart as that of her valiant husband—or fills the British eye with genuine tears, like that death which defalcated our happiness, and threw a gloom over all our glories. King Edward could survive it but a year—he left the infant Richard successor, appointing a regency among his uncles: he left our language spoken in courts of justice, some new coins invented, and a great advance made in woollen manufactures. With the assistance of his commons, he prevailed on the nobility no longer to abet rapine and robbery, by affording open protection to thieves or murderers belonging to their numerous dependants; and was publicly applied to (but without success) to make no churchman chancellor or secretary of state; under pretence that they had no leisure to attend in *both* capacities.

capacities. Windsor's proud turrets now lifted their heads on high, and every thing evinced the progress of authority from barons independent of their sovereign, to a consolidated mass of king and commons, supporting royalty against the nobles of the land. Many things however retarded, though many contributed to accelerate these events, and *Retrospection* will need little more than one fact to shew, that if such a change was indeed coming forward, it was coming very slowly. This may be proved by my Lord Morley's killing the bishop of Worcester's deer in this reign, and the bishop making him do penance for it in Worcester cathedral, bare-headed and bare-footed: while the king interceded for him in vain, and even offered the bishop a *present* if he would remit the punishment. A continuance of the aristocracy for more years than it had reason to hope for, was afforded by the reign and character of Richard II. whose propensity to favourites, and whose rapacity for money to supply *their* requests, turned his thoughts to such practices as highly and even justly offended the old barons, and half forced them upon asserting their ancient privileges, insolently broken in upon by a king, who, though he could controul a lawless and senseless rabble, as in the case of Wat Tyler's insurrection, knew not either to conciliate by sweetness, or overawe by virtue, the nobles who had not yet forgotten their original equality with princes, who could not count ancestry higher than their own. Added to these demerits, Richard had no children; and Lionel, duke of Clarence, next brother to the Black Prince, had only one child, a daughter, of whom little seems to have been thought, while the great duke of Lancaster, third son of Edward and Philippa was cruelly and foolishly insulted by his reigning nephew, who banished the young earl of Hereford, his only son, and then seized the estates and personalty of the offended and expiring parent—such conduct could not long be tolerated: Henry, upon pretence of resuming his rights, and claiming the just inheritance of his father, hurried from his exile, and braved king Richard on his own island—where, supported by many of
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the barons, and at the head of numerous and powerful partizans, the duke of Lancaster stretched his pretensions soon, and seized that crown, which his uncle knew not how to keep, how to enjoy, or how to defend; and from Henry of Hereford, became in a few months, without any opposition, king of England. That his weak predecessor should be killed in prison surprizes no one now, and it appears that few were affected by it when the affair happened. That his youthful consort was restored to her own country, where after only half a year's mourning, she wedded le duc d'Orleans, was another proof of the low standard our Richard had risen to, but that no one stirred in favour of the right heir, is stranger; for Philippa, sole daughter of brave Lionel, Edward the third's next son, had married Edmund Mortimer, earl of March, and their boy ought assuredly to have succeeded upon demise of Richard. The young duke of Lancaster however, with *ayde of kyn*, as he called it, and good friends, obtained the throne about the year 1400.

Before that time sir John Philpot, citizen and merchant of London, had undertaken to clear the Channel of pirates at his own expence, evincing the spirit and opulence of *our* nation, while Germany boasted the birth of Berthold Swartz, whose inventive head found out new modes for the destruction of his fellow creatures: the use of ordnance in war is attributed to *him*, who first proved his cannon at Venice, where he resided during the time Germany was divided into factions concerning the choice of an emperor. That country had never been at rest since Charles IV. son to John of Bohemia had bought off Frederick the marquis of Misnia, with 10,000 marks, and made composition with Guntheris, earl of Swartzburgh, who was supposed to die poisoned, because four of the electors had preferred him to his opponents in 1350, when Mecklenburgh was first erected into a duchy: though Martinus Polonus tells of a brave leader from that district in 1274, or thenabouts, who fighting in the holy wars, was detained prisoner at Grand Cairo twenty-six years, and being then released,

leased, went home and was obeyed by his subjects as usual. But our eye must be a moment kept on Charles, who reigned thirty years I think, having rid himself of all competitors; and fastened his son Wenceslaus the ugly and the indolent, upon the succession, by making him in early youth king of the Romans. The odd seizure of his empress Anne, daughter to Count Palatine of the Rhine at Pisa, by some young madmen enamoured of her beauty, is related only by Dugravius; I believe it was in order that the valorous knights who rescued her with the young princess, might be duly celebrated. Such an occurrence, however, shews the backward state of civilization in Germany and Italy, about the middle of the fourteenth century, which witnessed a violent insurrection of the French peasantry near Beauvoisi, and saw them burn, as Froissart says, sixty castles belonging to nobles who had offended, and grossly injured them, before the tumult was quelled: in this last occurrence, and in the manner of their behaviour, when for a moment the sword was their own, might have been traced the even *then* quickening spirit of democracy in France; but penetration had little place in those days, while the arts were making astonishing, tho' half unheeded progress—poetry gave hopes of perfection in a latent Ariosto, and painting threatened to shew in a few years more, that point of excellence which none have power to pass over.

These probabilities of future skill soon to be arrived at supreme eminence, were however contemporaneous with the tale of the py'd Piper: and such was the credulity of mankind in these times, that it was universally believed how a strange person appeared in the town of Hamelin, dressed in a strange dress of various colours—how he would neither eat nor speak, but played upon his pipe a strain so sweet and so uncommon, that while all eyes were turned to gaze upon him, rats were observed running from their holes, and sitting in the square, careless of men or dogs, observant of his musick. This event seized on the imagination of the magistrates, and they bargained with such a piper for a sum of money, if he would call the rats out of the town

town—by signs the contract was soon made, and the musician rising and walking towards a large cave just at the entrance of the city, playing as he walked, the creatures followed after him, and he seduced them on to their destruction. Claiming his meed however, 'twas refused; the plague of rats infested them no more, and the old magistrates, like Pharaoh, being relieved, hardened their hearts—but like him they were punished. The py'd Piper stood once more in the square, and changed his mode of playing—but so celestial, so persuasive were the notes, from every house rushed forth a troop of children, and surrounded him; nor could the mayor keep his own sons at home—every infant from two years old to twelve, followed the preternatural musick to the cave, where the musician himself walked in with all his train of innocents: the mouth of the place closed, and they came out no more.

Such a tale should not have crossed our *retrospective* eye however, had not the writings of the town borne date even to the year 1700, *ab exitu puerorum*, and was there not even yet a pillar of stone with the story engraven on it at the cave's mouth. Musick was perhaps less understood than were other arts, or else her powers were thought less limited than those of her sisters. King Eric the Good, had a harper in Denmark, who boasted uncommon and immediate influence over his hearers; it is related of him, that the mild monarch challenged him to exert his energy to the utmost, confiding in his own philosophical evenness of temper. The musician however, like Timotheus of old, is said by his historians to have so transported the king, (and courtiers of course) that Eric leaping from his seat, threw himself upon the harper sword in hand, and the attendants pretending equal passion with the prince, dispatched him in an instant; leaving an example for future artists to suppress such dangerous powers, and confine themselves to amuse their superiors, not drive them quite distracted. 'Twas after Eric's death and that of his successor, that time labouring with new births, produced the Semiramis of the north,

Margaret of Waldemar, who we have seen uniting under her own government the frozen realms of Denmark, Sweden and Norway: endeavouring, as it should appear, to synthesize some parts of Europe, and cement them; while the southern nations were breaking into parts.

The death of Gregory XI. threw all Italy, and those countries immediately connected with it into terrible confusion. The schism was tremendous. Urban VI. was inaugurated at Rome, to which place the late pope had transferred the seat of majesty; Clement VII. reigned at Avignon. The Italian populace had besieged and clamoured round the conclave, "No Frenchman, no Frenchman—a Roman sovereign or death," till the cardinals were frightened into their first election of Bartolo Bari, a native of Naples, but respected by the whole peninsula for his strict life and manners. His unseasonable severities however, incensed many nobles, who then complained of the undue election, and favoured the cause of a gentler and politer Clement, whose pretensions were abetted by Charles the Wise of France, a man of eloquence and learning like himself, and who collected nine hundred books placed in the library at the Louvre. The kings of Castile and Scotland declared for *this* party, while England remained with the Roman pontiff resident in Italy. Urbanists and Clementines divided all Christendom between them, and tearing the ecclesiastical power in pieces, tore likewise the veil which had till then concealed much misconduct. Disgraceful truths were told on both sides, and while the partizans of one pope *thought* they were only tormenting his rival—all aided in reality the sect of Wickliffe, which spared no pains in pulling out the black deformities of the *papal power*, regardless of any particular individual, and exposing them to open view. The commons too, in ours and other countries, silently won their way through this whole century, (for church and state are necessarily connected) and as the tiers etat of clergy gradually weakened, the plebeian order strengthened in proportion: for king and barons found *their* assistance useful, to counteract what each termed incroachment in the other.

other. Nor were the characters of those who now contended for the command of every prince's conscience, less luckily designed for promoting the destruction of both.

When John XXII. had been opposed and thwarted many years by Corbarius the anti-pope, he ordered him on the very first appearance of submission, to be absolved and brought before him, when he received the kiss of peace bestowed with kind and Christian haste for reconciliation, manifested by that meek spirited and exemplary pontiff: *these* men on the contrary, had no spirit of yielding or of forgiving, and stood upon their own independence completely, reckless of the common cause, and persuaded of their own right to the submission of mankind.

Urban, who wore a hair-shirt next his skin, and mortified his flesh by voluntary torments, took seven rebellious cardinals, and tying them in seven sacks, threw them into Tyber; Clement received with elegance and splendour, those who inclined to run from so rough a master, and the schism lasted I think, fifty years. Meantime Spain seemed as if recovering from Peter's cruelty, her wounds closed under Henry's reign, surnamed the Gracious: but Mahomet, the Moor of Granada, poisoned him in a pair of envenomed boots; his son John who succeeded, fell from his horse and died in less than twelve years after his father, and one of his unhealthy progeny, Henry, surnamed the Sick, wore Arragonia's crown, when the year 1400 saw England's peers disgraced by a new power, exercised now for the first time by kings, the making nobles by royal patent: a dreadful blow upon the aristocracy, admission to which body was till that hour denied to every possible merit, save descent—a prodigious prerogative acquired by monarchs, who in the beginning, as we may suppose, used it sparingly and with caution: but while sovereigns of separated states grew powerful, the western, and infinitely more still the eastern empire, was frittering fast away. Robertson observes, that although much splendour of appearance graced the court of Vienna, the princes and inferior states

States of the empire were subjects only in name, each of them possessing a complete municipal jurisdiction within the precincts of his own territory. All these accidents combined to encrease the power of the Turk, who, when he heard that the young king of France had taken the lilies (*fleur de lys*) for his device in coat armour, because emblematick of his youth and innocence; laughed and observed, "That the young king of England was sending over his uncle Thomas of Woodstock to mow them down." In effect, Bajazet, successor to Amurath, took that method with all whom he suspected of opposition, and his strangling Jacup, the next brother to the throne, set a savage fashion, soon imitated by succeeding Ottomans. The story of this tyrant allowing court fees for administration of justice, is likewise striking enough. His favoured fool Sinam, being excited to the work by Ali Bassa, one day when he thought his master in good humour, dressed himself up as an ambassador, and begged to be sent as such to the Greek emperor—"For what purpose?" said Bajazet—"To request some of his poor miserable bare-footed friars for us to make judges of—now my dear lords are sent to prison," says the jester: "I can, replied the sultan, supply their places with my own subjects"—"We have none as learned in our realms," answered the fool—"Well, well, *you* loved them," cried the sovereign, "but they took fees, and I will have their heads sent me to-morrow." "'Tis just for that reason," says the sly Ethiopian, "that I am going to fetch those foolish Christians hither, as no men but they who take an oath to starve themselves, will forbear accepting fees when you give them no salary." "The child is right," rejoined the Turk after a moment's pause, "'tis a false prejudice; I'll make my *cadis*, or crown-lawyers, a handsome appointment in future, and till I have done so they may take the fees—bring the lords here again."

But Tamerlane's* exploits attract more forcibly the momentary glance of

* Timur seems to have been this great man's real name, but his dependents called him *Timur Beg*, lord Timur of course—his enemies seeing him halt like Agésilas of

of *Retrospection*. A bright illuminated spot is he, irradiated by glories of superior worth to all the oriental heroes. A new character passing too quick across the confined field of our mental telescope. Nor Pagan nor Mahometan, nor Christian nor Jew; this wondrous pattern of excellling virtue, burst suddenly upon the astonished world; and added to his conquests the merit of discovery. An immense tract of eastern Scythia had, during all the ages we have reviewed, lain far remote and heedless of those struggles which changed the face of Europe, and disturbed the nat'ral apathy of Asia, ever disposed to slumber life away in the dull round of sensual pleasures, and to exclude care from her strong-built seraglio. The Chinese empire crested on her confines by *Fohe* or *Noe*, had rarely been approached, and little thought on. Trajan himself tried not to pass the sacred Ganges, though he had thrown a bridge over Donaw, and Pompey was easily contented with those limits which Alexander had been taught to think restrained the race of man. But Tamerlane now shook those worlds, the Macedonian chief once wept for, and shone a prodigy of valour and good fortune. He fell upon the unprepared and vainly-wise Chinese, won from them many provinces and districts, and on his return through eastern Scythia, or in more modern language Muscovy, he dropt down unexpectedly on the Greek empire; visited with admiration the neglected city of Constantinople, and meditated her preservation from the uplifted arm of Bajazet, just terror of terrestrial multitudes. John Palæologus had associated his third son in 1384, which preference having irritated the elder brother, *he* had declared war of course, and weakened the sceptre by civil dissention that ended in imprisonment of those who bore it.

old, surnamed him *Tamurlang* Polignac says; Timur the Lame, as in our western annals, Henry the *Limping*. This French writer sets his meridian later than does Isaacson, whose chronology from Berg. Ann. Turc. was in high reputation in days less distant than our own from the event.

The

The Turks however, on pretence of taking sides in this family-quarrel for scarcely-existent power, pulled the princes out again by threats, and Andronicus was given up to repent in the sultan's court, his hasty resentments against Emanuel. In this state were the affairs of Christianity in the east, when its tyrannick master had submitted all Thessaly and Thrace, and the Morea to his sway: not contented to conquer the king of Caramania, Bajazet hung *him* up on his own palace walls, and being as Knollys says, furious of nature, and in anger dreadful, was, notwithstanding, defied by the brave Comte de Nevers, who brought into the field 2000 chosen knights, Frenchmen, to fight against as many infidels, their tyrant at their head. The event was fatal to our fearless Europeans. Relentless Bajazet destroyed them *all*, and cropt the flower of Catholick nobility. In this courageous chief the virtuous Tamerlane descried an enemy fit for his sword to conquer and correct: upon the plains of Stella 'twas they met, where Mithridates had been beat by Pompey, and Belisarius, six hundred years after that, had drenched the arid soil with Gothick blood. The Turk and Tartar here fought hard for victory, which fixed at length upon the crest of honour; and Bajazet, yet unsubmitting to his fate, was seized, while his opponent scorned to take his life—but in a moving-prison brought him on, caged as a wild destructive animal, not to be tamed by mild or gentle usage. No entry was ever seen more glorious than that of Tamerlane into Constantinople, which since the days of its first founder, had never yet beheld so great a man. With matchless probity he there refused the offer of a town he so admired, a sinking empire he had so preserved; and leaving Palæologus in the throne, returned to administer strict justice in his native country, and keep his own persuasion unprofaned. 'Twas in or near A. D. 1400, when this brave prince resigned his soul into the hands of that Creator whom alone he worshipped, being in the most absolute sense a deist, theosophite or unitarian: without religion therefore, though graced with virtues that would have adorned the
best

best: it is however, exceedingly observable, that as this heroick character tolerated all opinions, although his own led him to think no ecclesiastical establishments necessary, so with him his empire seems to have extinguished. A solitary star he shone, but unsupported by borrowed light, his own not being eternal, though inherent; heaven refused it: lest his example might be followed by those who would have imitated his errors—not his conduct.

- C H A P. XXIII.

FROM A. D. 1400, TO THE YEAR 1425.

WE must now turn our *retrospective* eye back to the western empire, where Wenceslaus, seized with a new humour of protecting the hitherto hated Jews from massacre in Bohemia, and not in the least studious to support, by strictness of morals, that extraordinary liberality which he professed in matters of religion; became ill thought on, and was at length driven out. His various escapes and odd adventures, marked with his own hand on his own Bible, I had the singular pleasure of seeing and examining at Vienna; where the pretty washerwoman's tenderly-requited kindness to her sovereign, remains recorded in a very neat miniature on a margin of the New Testament, with less propriety than gratitude. Wenceslaus therefore, though ugly, found friends among the sex; and although surnamed the Indolent when seated on his throne, ceased not by restless endeavours to regain it, after he had provoked his subjects to withdraw their allegiance. He died king of Bohemia in 1418. A terrible pestilence during this period wasted Polonia; and Casimir's unkindness to his queen, daughter to a landgrave of Hesse, was supposed to have called this vengeance down on a yet unenlightened nation. Her death gave him an opportunity of leading a life less offensive with Hedwigis, a consort of his own country, who was less irksome to him with complaints of the coarse manners in Polonia, and the preference she gave to a more polished though less powerful court. By this lady however Casimir left only two daughters, whom Lewis of Hungary soon threw into confinement,

ment, leaving their aunt, his mother, guardian over *them*, and returning southward himself in search of pleasures, which Buda could better bestow than melancholy Cracow. There however the queen regent, sunk in sensuality, hid her enormous vices from mankind; while taxes and tortures so worried the poor subjects, that some lords sent a monk to let Lewis know that a rebellion was inevitable. He, at the instigation of his wicked mother, poisoned the monk, and made the vile bishop, her confessor, regent; associating him in power with the lady, who died in consequence of her excesses, whilst her colleague ran madly up a haystack after some peasant wench who fled his violence, and breaking his neck by a fall she gave him from the top, completed the aversion taken to Lewis and his friends. Some noble Poles now met on horseback, and resolved to pull the princesses from prison. Hedwigis the elder was married to Ladislaus, and reigned in peace over her native country; while Mary, scarce fourteen, was given to Sigismund, the impious but powerful emperor of the west.

John the Delicate and Henry the Sickly, had during this time feebly supported the Spanish sceptre; but Ferdinand, surnamed the Honest, brother to this last-named sovereign, redeemed the honour of the old Celtiberians, and taking Anquiterra, drove the Moors before him. Flushed with conquest, he attempted Sicily, and added it to the possessions of the house of Arragon. This sovereign encouraged learning and learned men, and had the happiness of seeing the Bible translated into the Portuguese tongue.]

France meanwhile was a prey to civil commotions. Charles VI. surnamed le Bien-aimé, felt his reign in early days disturbed by a sedition of the *Maillotins*; for in every nation now symptoms appeared of strength and a resisting power in the *people*, not dreamed of by the antecedent princes of Europe, and too little dreaded even by those that in this fifteenth century courted their kindness, in order to balance them against the barons' power. The Flemings had revolted too, scorning *their* sovereign; and Charles the Well-beloved met and chas-

tified them on the plains of Rosbach, where Frederick of Prussia gained a famous battle in our own times. The same places are naturally sought out for the same purposes, and more than one victory is boasted by many situations convenient for mutual hostility. A sun-stroke on the king's return to Paris robbed him for many weeks, months I believe, of his fine intellects, by bringing on a phrenzy fever, which left his nerves so shattered that he never more possessed the powers of mind or body necessary for governing a great nation. His sister Isabella,* married to our Richard II. was sent home by the successor, and wedded in happier nuptials to the Duc d'Orleans. Henry IV. meanwhile pushed condescension to the lower orders further than any English prince before had done; and Shakespear I suppose exaggerated but little when he said, that

A brace of draymen bid God speed him well,
And had the tribute of his supple knee,
With thanks my countrymen, my loving friends, &c.

But Henry's title being more than weak, he made it a point to conciliate those whom Richard, more confident and secure, had scrupled not to oppress. His reign, like those of most usurpers, seems wholly spent in efforts to keep himself upon that throne by force, to which he had been raised by fraud and accident. Another circumstance arose to keep the right heir from his crown, by the hot passions of Owen Glendour, who in a private war upon the earl of March's territories, took the boy prisoner; for he, although but thirteen years old, was fighting beside his uncle and guardian, Sir Edmund Mortimer, in the field; and Henry, happy he was thus disposed of, went on to punish other rebels, the Archbishop of York being one. To the astonishment of mankind, *he* was executed, and Wickliffe's notions were visibly practised and realized in his execution.

* It was King Richard's first queen, Anne, that introduced *saddle*-saddles for ladies to ride upon in England.

The Commons, under this democratically-disposed sovereign, began to feel their own increasing consequence; and if, in order to tread down the nobles, they now and then did make unwary concessions to their subtle monarch, they proved their sense of such concessions' danger by diligent retraction of them. Against his dearest hope of new-establishing the crown upon *heirs-male*, thereby tacitly t'exclude the house of Mortimer, the House of Commons, fear'd at the idea of a salique law, insisted on the succession of princesses and their issue; nor durst the king oppose such a request, for fear the earl of March's pretensions might be spoken of.

Churchmen next lent an excuse for their ill-gotten wealth to be examined into. It was their way in England to oblige their villains or vassals to marry free heiresses; by which collusion numberless small estates came into their hands. The people made a calculation of all the ecclesiastical property, and offered to possess Henry of 20,000l. o'year, dividing the rest among fifteen hundred *new* earls whom he was to create; and found out that the clerical functions would be better performed by fifteen thousand parish priests, paid at the rate of seven marks o'year. The prudent prince however saw plainly that things were not ripe as yet for such *large* depredations: he knew the papal power was not so declined as to have suffered these immense encroachments; he feared lest all the world should cry against him as a Wickliffite, and raise commotions that perhaps would end in setting youthful Mortimer upon the throne. He therefore burned a wretched *Lollard* of no family, as proof of his catholicism; rejecting the proposal of the Commons, and conciliating, in some measure, the half alarmed and much offended clergy.

One other incident demands a moment's glance of *Retrospection*, merely to prove the prodigious advances made by freedom under the reign of this great duke of Lancaster. His eldest son protected a riotous companion, who had been condemned by Gascoigne, the chief-justice, for some enormous offence, and found no safeguard from young Henry's favour.

favour. The prince, amazed to hear a man *he* countenanced was still detained in prison by the laws, flew to the bench and struck the judge who sat there. The judge however had so profited by the new doctrines, that much more mindful of his own place's dignity than of the petulant folly of a hot-headed youth; he gravely proceeded to commit the prince *himself*, and the king praised his noble-minded conduct. While by such methods our Henry IV. *bestowed* that independence which he sought to *obtain*, and bestowed it too on those who had been hitherto looked down upon as mere appendages to greatness, and treated like the cattle which their pastures fed; the commons of the realm rose each moment in respectability: their agriculture improved, their sheep increased; corn was exported, wool was manufactured; and when they grew important, they found out they were *aggrieved*. A reader of history, from this hour will find the lower order ever restless, ever uneasy: they had tasted the tree of knowledge, and knew all their wants. The solitary Indian thus, among the Cordilleras de los Andes, worshipt the invisible Naiad of the stream which cooled his grot and gratified his thirst; but tracing the rivulet up to its origin, which he expected to find paradisaical, he came, after long toil, to the foot of a tremendous glacier, the rough cataract pouring floods of foam down a black rock. "And is it so indeed, (says he) that keen research repays her votaries?" It is so: Oh then let the spirit of investigating deeply rest a while: act well your parts, readers, each in your separate sphere; and for knowledge of past times, spare from the present only a momentary glance of general *Retrospection*. The irregular behaviour of an eldest son was not a misfortune confined to England's king: Robert earl of Fife, made regent of Scotland during his father's state of imbecility, imprisoned Alexander, a younger brother, for burning the cathedral church of Murray; and when at length he came himself to reign, the strange licentious manners of his heir, young David duke of Rothsay, were so offensive and intolerable, that he was forced to banish the boy, and some old authors say he died of want. The Irish had
been

been firmly hold together by Richard II. in despite of deeds which hourly provoked and invited insurrection. Our sovereign's daughter was the wife of Eric, the nephew and associate heir of warlike Margaret de Waldemar; while Joan, daughter to the earl of Holland, queen of Bohemia and empress by her marriage with Wenceslaus, left a son William, surnamed the Young. This prince, wedded with Philippa of Flanders, being at dinner in the French court, an officer came forward and cut off the table-cloth before him, to separate his seat in a disgraceful manner from that of the company; because the death of Count William II. which happened *only* one hundred and forty years before, had never been revenged by his family. "It was pardonable," cried the herald, that his successor should forget an offence by which "he came to the crown at six months old. William the Good likewise might have stood excused: his scrupulous mind, ever employed in framing penances for imaginary faults and fancied crimes, "was unlikely to have prosecuted such an affair as that. William the Mad *could* not be trusted with the sword of justice; but that none "should for a century and a half have undertaken to wield it, was a "shame to chivalry." In consequence of this harangue the youth returned home, called together friends and followers, and stimulating them to the enterprise by an account of his own ill usage when at Paris, a war against the Frisians was begun successfully; the body of this injured ancestor was dug up, and brought in triumph to Valenciennes, where it was buried with pomp and pageantry, according to the spirit of the times. That spirit doubtless was excited and kept warm by metrical chronicles and pedigrees in rhyme, which Warton tells us of in the history of poetry, and which tended no little towards keeping in all countries the aspiring flame alive. 'Twas to extinguish such recollection in poor Cambria that cruel Edward I. had killed the bards. But Chaucer now refined our language, and wrote verses for the courtiers, of which he was one, being a kinsman to the house of Lancaster, that drove forward every possible improvement. The genius for devotion

votion, however, seems oddly mingled with all his ideas, though light and playful, often indecently so; but 'tis pretty and curious when the birds are made by him to sing mass upon May-day, the eagle taking *Veni Creator*, a popingjay *Cæli enarrant*, the owl *Benedicite*, whilst *Te Deum* is chanted in alternate stanzas by a thrush. Quere whether nightingales were then known in Great Britain? her strains would surely not have been forgotten. Our rougher dialect indeed now smoothed apace, and shewed itself capable of wit and elegance. There was a strong push made for a change of manners in mankind. Westminster Abbey was enlarged about that time, oil-painting arrived in sight of its uttermost point of perfection, and sculpture seemed revived in Italy, as once in Greece, where figures first began to live, and struggle too for immortality, so long as this globe shall last.

A company of linen-weavers meantime increased Great Britain's growing opulence, and London found herself well supplied with coals. The German genius hovering over the mines of sulphur and saltpetre, dug up destruction to the sons of earth, while cards were invented or imported from the east for amusement of the French king. This is national character. But the rebuilding Westminster hall, and the newly introduced usage of pleading in English an Englishman's cause, arrests our hurried sight more forcibly, because it paves the way, 'tis plain, for ampler reformation. He who can use his tongue to plead for property before his prince, will learn to plead for mercy in't before his God; nor long remain confined to utter sounds, of which himself knows not the meaning. Universities indeed were springing up on every side: St. Andrew's, Leipfick, Salamanca, diffused reviving knowledge round the world; and even northern nations now sheltered her shrinking branches: when lovely Hedwigis, the queen of Poland, left a large legacy for colleges at Cracow.

Alexander V. who attained the dignity of pope only through his virtue and learning, and who considered himself merely as an instrument of Providence to unite once more under one head a church lately divided

divided against herself, and in greater danger of falling than those who headed either party could foresee; contributed so largely to the cause of literature, that from a rich bishop (as he said) he became a poor cardinal, and was contented to die a very beggarly pope: escaping easily the charge of nepotism, for he had never known parent or brother, sister, uncle, or any tie of blood, nearer than some one who pretended to be his cousin, because like him he had been born in Candia; and Alexander, laughing, drove him from the door.

Such characters were now necessary to maintain the papacy, which Benedict and Boniface had shaken by their ill-timed contests; and which Innocent and Gregory had as vainly struggled to support with empty menaces and fallacious miracles. The first had been derided by the Florentines, who, when they refused corn to Rome, were threatened with an interdict, which never was laid on, for fear it should be laughed at instead of regarded: and as to the false miracles, they had been detected by John Hufs, confessor to Sophia of Bavaria, whom Alexander mildly exhorted to silence, but in vain. This busy spirit, warm with the notions that Wickliffe had instilled, scarcely despaired of converting the pope himself; whose candour and science laid him open to conviction, and who had himself written a beautiful treatise on the immaculate conception of our blessed Lady, which Luther many years after could not, and did not disapprove.

Cardinal Cossa however, the trusted friend and favourite of this mild and virtuous sovereign, lured him away from Rome to Bologna, where he soon died, in tortures not much inferior to those suffered by Edward II. of England, having had death administered to him in a *poisoned enema*: while Cossa was quietly elected pope, under the well-known name of John XXIII. His election was singularly bold, as his life was eminently wicked: he threw St. Peter's mantle over his shoulders, and cried "'Tis I who am chosen now to the pontificate." *Ego sum papa*. The conclave was awed, and the unhappy choice confirmed. Sigismund, a character of no more virtue than Cossa, elected himself

to the empire in a mode not much dissimilar. When Rupert of Bavaria died, and the electors met, he was first, as Marquis of Brandenburg enquired of, whom he preferred as worthy of the imperial crown. “*Myself, Lords!*” was the haughty and little expected reply; “for Sigismund is able (continued he) to rule the world, and I know not of whom else I can so say.” Sigismund however was apt to mistake confidence for ability. Surveying his army and that of the allied Christians near Nicopolis, “What need have we to fear the Turks falling on us,” exclaimed this impious prince; “if heaven itself were to fall, here are troops that could hold it up with their halberts.” From those plains however he made haste to run, when heaven, to punish such mad pride, forced his fine soldiers to fly before the infidels: yet was this emperor still self-sufficient, obtrusive, and injurious. When he was visiting poor Charles VI. at Paris, his curiosity led him to the courts of justice, where a cause of considerable property was accidentally trying before the judge, one Sigrit having endeavoured to wrest it from the right possessors, but was at length baffled, because having made some pretence which none but knights could claim, the business ended, and sentence was about to be pronounced; but Sigismund, who sat as a spectator, and till then *incognito*, leaped forward and suddenly knighted the fellow, putting on his spurs himself, and swearing he should not lose his cause for want of that ceremony being performed. ’Twas on the honour of this emperor, who had in no transaction of his life shewn any care for justice or decorum, that John Hufs and Jerome of Prague, the new reformers, depended for protection; when by a solemn command, signed by himself, in a safe conduct given them to arrive at the council of Constance without let or hindrance, and with full permission to pass, stop, stay or return freely; he signed the same with his own signet, and pledged imperial faith for their kind treatment. All histories record the horrid perfidy; all nations acknowledge these unhappy men as martyrs to opinions now thought wisely of, even by those regions who then looked with

calmness

calmness on the flames which burned the professors of them. *Hufs* had for three days preached against the enormous wickedness of the clergy, and maintained the right which all alike possessed to the receiving of the eucharistick cup; yet had he never presumed to administer it, though he said mass publicly at Constance, where pope and emperor, and four patriarchs, twenty-nine cardinals, three hundred and sixty-five archbishops and bishops, five hundred and sixty-five abbots and doctors, with no fewer than sixteen thousand princes, nobles and knights, made a temporary residence. That three hundred and twenty minstrels, troubadours and jongleurs, six hundred barbers and seven hundred common courtezans, should follow such an assemblage of nobility, need not be wondered at; but I think little Constance never could have held one half of them. History indeed makes slender resistance against the gripe of a rigorous computist. We will try to accommodate all sides, by supposing some buildings to have been erected which time or hands, the purpose once effected, have thrown down. There is a mention of the horses being in danger of starving for want of fodder; whilst all gravely attended the stake, and heard *Hufs* singing psalms in the midst of the fire, professing to observe the town's appellation in his own *constant* endurance of the torments foolish zeal inflicted, and telling his companion that the fathers were only roasting an old *goose* now (alluding to his name pronounced in the Bohemian dialect*) but that from his ashes should in future days spring up a *white swan*, who should fly over all their heads. Protestants have since applied that happy prediction to Luther.

Something retributive however ought to be told, before we turn from such *Retrospect* away; and it should above all things be remembered, that Gregory XII. anti-pope, and resident, I think, at Avignon, accused John XXIII. of a long list of heinous and truly atrocious crimes before this very council, adding the murder of his amiable pre-

* *Hufs*, gutturally pronounced like *Choos*, *Goose*.

deceffor to the number. John generously offered to plead guilty, and confefs all the charges; perfuaded that popes could only be depofed for *heresy*. In this however his friends over-ruled him, and he fled the town difguifed as a poftillion.

Sigifmund meanwhile, who betrayed the men this cruel pontiff martyred, had an Italian favourite, one Pipo, a Florentine by birth, and whom no friendship could cure of prejudices againft a German fovereign. This man, that he made general in his wars againft the Venetians, underftanding *their* language, as he comically urged, better than the *emperor's* guttural pronunciation, took a long purfe from Mocenigo, then doge, and gave him an opportunity of cutting off the whole army. His perfidious prince however, detefting treachery in any one except himfelf, melted fome gold in a crucible, and pouring it hot down wretched Pipo's throat, punifhed a traitor, and at the fame time condemned his own paff conduct. A five years truce with Venice ended the difpute, and gave that republick leifure to adorn its growing greatnefs. Part of St. Mark's church was burned by accident, and part of the ducal palace. It was decreed that none fhould, upon pain of paying 1000 ducats, move for the building them anew. Mocenigo paid the fine, and began the beautiful fabrick at his own expence, which I faw exifting in the year 1786. "Whatever this happy ftate undertook," fays l'Iftoria Fiorentina, "commonly fucceeded even beyond its hopes; and if they loft by war they won by negociation; fo that peace ftill found Venice happier, richer, wifer than before." *Venezia ricca, faggia, e signorile*. The Florentines too, under their patriot ruler John de Medicis, were cultivating arts and fciences, not arms. Their dread of the *Bifcione*, or Milanefe, fo called from the coiled ferpent worn as coat-armour by Visconti, made them cling clofer to that ftate which had wedded and could rule the Adriatick fea, and called in commerce with every gale that blew. Their Tufcan artift Michelozzi was employed in making drawings from Venetian architecture. Their learned Traverfari played the interpreter in conferences

ferences with the Greeks ; and every state of Italy, although in political interests disunited, appeared of one accord to resolve, that the peninsula which once had ruled the world should now enlighten, civilize, restore it.

Poggio* dug out the classical authors from those ruins which gothic barbarism had heaped upon their heads, with diligence rarely attendant on genius like his own ; and Aretine's *aquila volante* began to fly. His pretty quaint epitaph shews the esteem his countrymen had of him, when they tell us how eloquence was struck dumb by his death ; history put on a black robe, and the muses ceased not to shed tears upon his tomb. Andrea Verocchio meantime employed *his* pen and ink in *drawings*, which will live as long as writing would have lived, had printing never been discovered. But this vast genius studied engraving too, and there are many pictures of his painting : every invention was welcome to his mind which could contribute to retain memorial of the human face divine, which tells the gazer that soul dwells within. 'Twas he first found the method of taking perfect resemblances with plaster of Paris ; and late to recompence such powers so applied, his is the boast that Peter Perugino, a name for ever to be revered, and Leonardo da Vinci, philosopher, professor, *father* of the nascent arts ; studied their rudiments under Verocchio's eye. Martin V. a noble pope of the Colonna family, confirmed the passion for knowledge by his example ; and by a long exertion of mingled princely with Christian virtues, supported the authority whilst he increased the influence of the papal chair. But whilst the laurel new revived.

* He found Quintilian, Silius Italicus, and Valerius Flaccus, under ground at Porto St. Gallo, where he used to go out at Florence, *per pigliar fresco* (to take the cool air) as the Tuscans call it. His letter giving an account how those three MSS. were discovered under the tower of a monastery, erected on what was left of an old castle built in pagan days, *still exists*. 'Tis dated 1417, and directed to the Council of Constance, where all the wise men were assembled, to prevent (had it been possible) the revival of learning and of taste.

put forth fresh beauties from the layers which had so long lain concealed under a weight of earth, *that* branch, (in our day become so luxuriant) called scenick or dramatick representation; still lingered far behind. When to the great council of Constance flocked half Europe for curiosity and entertainment, great shows and feasts of course were made in the town; one of which being recorded for its magnificence, shews us the pitiable state of such diversions. A theatre however was here erected for the first time after the Vandal irruptions, and the first stage play exhibited had for its subject Herod and the Innocents. A knight came forward and begged the monarch's leave to take the adventure: the fool laughs at him; the women with their distaffs beat him off the stage; some children shriek, and then their mothers, making use of strange methods, drive away the baffled adventurer; and the king says he will commit the murders himself. Even *this* however was nearer to modern manners, than were the pageants set on foot in Italy some years before, when at Epiphany a large body of mendicant friars at Milan made the whole town subservient to their show, representing the three kings' offering to our blessed Saviour: an immense procession of horse and foot filling the streets, which were strewn with rushes for the purpose, pacing on to where the castle stands; and on that eminence a group was placed, habited in imitation of a holy family, destined to receive the presents of these magi. When I was last in Italy, 1786, the idea was not worn out: Naples exhibited the self-same device; but then the figures were in wood, or ivory, or silver, very small; but wonderfully elegant, neat, and expensive; whole terraces or suits of large apartments being allotted to this odd contrivance, and called *Presepio*. This one at Milan, related of by Flamma, must have been only a like fancy realized, a *live* Presepio, acted all by friars, instead of little figures from six to twelve inches high.

Edward the third of England's reign, famous for show and gala, produced at Coventry the Creation of the World, played by a society of
grey

grey monks; one of whom was dress'd up in a laced robe for God the Father, with a triple crown of gilt leather on his head: and the market cross fenced round served as a theatre. But *Retrospection's* eye is better engaged by his great-grandson Henry, the once wild Prince of Wales, who on his father's death leaped into his seat, like feathered Mercury, and nothing scrupulous to seize that crown which of due right belonged to his young cousin, heiress and daughter of the earl of March; invaded France, and so completely dazzled England by the bright splendour of his martial glories, that all objections to his title were forgotten, and the defects of it swallowed up and lost in the excessive personal regard paid to a youthful hero most resembling the never yet forgotten uncle to his father, Edward our Black Prince. There is a curious MS. extant at Cambridge, saying, upon the testimony of one Maidstone, that Henry the fourth's body was flung into the sea, and nothing buried but an empty coffin, which was solemnly interr'd, I think, at Canterbury. But I quote only from memory, and that imperfect.

Hume says, and wisely, that the predecessor of this military monarch, being incessantly employed to keep a throne on which he knew he was no more than an usurper, laid out much time in holding fast his friends; and suffered no man to enjoy court favour, but partizans of the Lancastrian house. Henry V. more confident and kind, threw open his protecting arms to all of honourable characters; and so strong seemed to be the fond attachment shewn his person and government, that when France bribed some nobles to assassinate him, the earl of March was foremost to detect the conspiracy. If such the fact, we plainly see how Henry was adored: if, as some authors say, the earl involved in it was freely pardoned by his generous sovereign, we see still plainer he deserved their love.

Unhappy Charles de Valois meanwhile, a prey to illness and inextricable confusion, which probably contributed to increase it; saw his once-lovely kingdom torn by factions, his family embroiled in dangerous

gerous contentions; the dukes of Berry, Burgundy, and Orleans, armed all against each other, and Henry of England preparing to invade and claim the throne of France, regardless of their *loi salique*, established for so many centuries: although willing enough to wear the British crown himself, which in pure strictness did belong to Anne, surviving sister of forgiven Mortimer, who died unmarried, and was soon forgotten. But, like the gay rake in a modern comedy, our youthful king considered generosity as the first virtue, and left lame justice to halt after in the rear. That spirit of chivalry however, and genius for the field, which had outgrown and stifled the vices of his youth, conquered likewise or suppressed ambition in his kindred; and Henry felt himself truly resistless both at home and abroad, whilst Edward Langley, earl of Cambridge, son to the duke of York, and husband to Anne Mortimer, fought by his side upon the plains of Agincourt. The victory won that day was so surprizing, that no annals within the reach of *Retrospect* pretend to equal it. The king appeared a prodigy of personal valour; and Frenchmen, discouraged by their own hapless sovereign's incapacity, looked on affrighted and amazed, as at a comet; till ours had dictated the terms of peace, and had taken quiet possession of their princess, and in her (by new appointment) of the succession; to the strange detriment of their young dauphin's right. But Paris was in the victor's hands, and 'twas he there prescribed his own conditions; when on Whitfunday 1421 poor Charles VI. infirm and powerless, sat down to dine with him, too much disordered in his spirits even to observe the marked distinction in the honours paid to Henry from those few conferred upon himself; and in a few months more, too ill to feel the advantage when his successful rival died, leaving a new-born son, unable to protect the conquests made for him; conquests in themselves glorious, but wholly useless; serving to drain our nation of its heroes, and what an Englishman much more laments, its *revenue*: that had been calculated at 56,000l. o'year in Henry the third's time: and although later reigns had seen trade flourish and
increase,

increase, young Henry, fifth of the name drove the national income back to the same sum, during the ten years that he held the sceptre. He pawned his jewels, and even pledged his crown, for money to supply his ruling passion; and careless of inducement or provocation to the battle, was with, or without reason, bent on war. His motto should have been the bullying verse in Congreve,

Fighting for fighting's sake's sufficient cause;
Fighting's to me—religion and the laws.

C H A P. XXIV.

TO THE SACKING OF CONSTANTINOPLE, A. D. 1455,

AND ITS IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES.

IN this short period many characters prominent beyond all the rest, pass through the field of our reviewing telescope, and crowd the glass of wearied *Retrospection*. But unity died with the destruction of monarchick government: and although the general blaze is heightened by the clustering of various qualities in numerous persons; 'tis but such effect as is produced by breaking a large diamond into small bits, and setting them the modern way, *transparent*. Circumstances make great men in little times, and 'tis the fact that forces out the character.

Our infant Henry being crowned at Paris, and his brave uncles invested with the regency, war entertained ambition with wide prospects, contracting on approach indeed, but still spreading again before the eyes of the great duke of Bedford, whose valour and accomplishments surpass'd his fellows, and crowded knights and 'squires round his standard. The duke of Glo'ster, his brave brother, ruled at home; and to the cardinal de Beaufort, legitimated son to John of Gaunt, was consigned the baby king for education. The House of Commons, growing in weight and wisdom every day, saw that a long minority might tend to increase the nascent power of the nation, while quarrels for high place amused those nobles who had not leisure to observe their own declension. Besides that, Charles le Bien-aimé being dead, and the young dauphin in no wise disposed to see his country lost, his claims forgotten,

forgotten, gave the bold English infinite vexation, by drawing their armies down among those provinces where loyalty to the old house still resided, and every day produced new difficulty in keeping what our conquering king had gained. Charles VII. was, in addition to all this, a man every way pleasing to the French by character: his love of feasting, his romantick passion for Agnes de Sorel, his ever-unsubdued genius for hoping, and the vigorous renewal of hostilities after every defeat, endeared him to the nobles who surrounded his person; although, when one of them saw him looking over his bill of fare upon the plains of Vernœuil, he drew a deep sigh—"Why, what d'ye think of it?" exclaimed the monarch. "I think, Sir," replied Louis de la Hire, "that never kingdom was more merrily lost."* In effect, the victory, and tract of country lost that day to his enemies, might reasonably have discouraged the bravest campaigner; and 'twas an accident, if ought in this world should be termed such, saved his crown.

Jaqueline, countess of Hainault and Holland, whose father, old count Egmond, died hydrophobous by the biting of a favourite dog; was left by him sole possessor of those realms, upon condition that she should marry the young duke of Brabant, first cousin to ambitious Burgundy. She submitted, and solemnized nuptials which she could not persuade herself to endure even three weeks, with a boy not quite fifteen years old. Foreseeing that his relations would confine her, she took the strange resolution of flying to England, and throwing herself on the protection of our duke of Gloster, a man she never saw; but who, charmed with the adventure, and seized with a violent passion for the countess, a beautiful woman of six and twenty years old, married her instantly, even without papal dispensation, and prepared to put himself at the head of an army to re-instate his fatal bride in her dominions. Such a step was certain to offend the court of Rome, and disoblige for ever the duke of Burgundy, on whose alliance our affairs

* Je pense qu'on ne saurait perdre son royaume plus gaiement.

in France chiefly depended. It had still worse effect. The cardinal de Beaufort, our intriguing bishop of Winchester, had long watched a moment to attack the Lord Protector, and his mad marriage with Jaqueline afforded it. Feuds of this consequence called Bedford from his army at Vernœuil to quiet them, and the affairs of France bore a much better appearance.

We will not yet however lose sight of the lady, whose connection with England was, before a year expired, dissolved, by an express command of Martin V.: and she accepting her secretary's hand, the lord of Borfelle, he was soon apprehended, put in prison, and threatened with immediate execution, if the countess would not make her will directly, declaring Philip duke of Burgundy, first cousin to the duke of Brabant, her heir. She signed the testamentary disposition, and died of grief. The youth who had originally caused all these disorders was already dead of that consumption which he was struggling with at the time he wedded Jaqueline; and the good duke of Glo'ster (so he was called) comforted himself in the embraces of dame Eleanor, made odious to us by Shakespear, and pleasing to no one by the pen of any historian.

Charles meanwhile, well named le Bien-fervi, found himself a second time assisted by a woman, towards the regaining his original right. It seems as if the highest and lowest of our sex had been, without their expectation, oddly enlisted to serve as instruments towards this man's re-instatement on the throne of his ancestors: for in this place a strange phenomenon presses upon our powers of *Retrospect*, and claims a transient glance for Joan of Arc. This artless and illiterate maid, born in a cottage, bred a cow-keeper, and at the age of twenty-seven years advanced to menial service in a coarse country inn; after some nights passed in strange perturbation, was suddenly, and, as she said, involuntarily impelled to seek the tent of an old French officer, then upon guard, and to demand of him safe convoy and entrance into a far distant church, St. Catharine, Fier à Bois, where, she informed him,

him, was deposited a sword and standard seven score years before, with which she was commissioned to defeat the English army, then lying entrenched before the town of Orleans; raise its siege certainly, and see the rightful monarch crowned at Rheims. Baudricourt, the second general in command, hesitated; but awed by superstitious veneration, after a short pause granted her request, and introduced her to his royal chieftain, who was no less astonished in his turn at her discerning him from all his courtiers, dressed in the same uniform; and at her steady and minute description of this all-conquering sword and banner brought from the Holy Land so long ago, upon a great occasion she ne'er heard of, and laid up in a place she never could have visited. The fame of Joan's strange enterprize and errand to the church at Fier à Bois, flew to the English camp, and facilitated her future victory by previous amazement. A supply of provision was sighed for by the garrison: the warrior maid covered its embarkation, and got in with her convoy. She next harangued both armies from the tower, and with impressive eloquence persuaded the duke of Burgundy's defection from the English. Enthusiasm inspired her hopes and seconded her views; at the warm instant she with joy displayed her heaven-sent standard from the walls of Orleans, and in a happy rally saved the town. Charles, freed from immediate pressure, pursued with spirit all his advantages; Joan too performed her mission in due time, and saw her lawful sovereign's coronation performed, as she had promised him, *at Rheims*. There she requested that her course might end, and begged retirement to her cot again. Not being permitted, she assured the king that victory would not in any preternatural mode further attend her steps. This sad assertion, never believed or listened to in the French camp, was notwithstanding verified too early; and our shocked fight sees with affliction their long-dreaded antagonist made prisoner by some French troops in English pay, who, under pretence of heresy and witchcraft, *burned her alive*.

Ill success followed their savage decision: our invading armies were
driven

driven home baffled, or cut to pieces on the continent; and while Charles wisely employed, regulated the affairs of his own kingdom, and endeavoured to repress the rising insolence of his young son: our tutored monarch now married to Margaret, daughter of Regner, king of Sicily, seemed as if transferred over to her care, rather than emancipated from that of his uncles; whose mad quarrel and everlasting bickerings, ended but in the cruel death of Humphry, lord protector. This dreadful event to which it was supposed, that Suffolk, the queen's favourite was privy, roused the lords who loved the stock of Mortimer, to excite Richard, son of Anne, by Edward earl of Cambridge, to claim the crown: he was then duke of York in right of his father, who died before the title came to him, and he was only child besides of the immediate heirs to our throne; yet was he loth to stir in his own cause, or make pretensions which his nearer ancestors had waved: a Prince of Wales being born too within the last seven years, Richard lay dormant till provoked past bearing by the proud duke of Somerset, who since the death of Suffolk had alone possessed court favour, both from king and queen.

England meantime, wearied with continuing to lose in France what she of right ought never to have gained there, grieved and growled; and showed sure symptoms of that internal war, which rendered our island afterwards a prey to its own teeth. Her hapless sovereign ill-assured of loyalty among the lower ranks, or of any, except partial fondness from the higher, felt the enfeebling power of scruples creep on him, and gave the house of York spirit to dispute with pious Henry, that dominion it had contentedly yielded to the hand of his warlike father. What appears most offensive on a *Retrospect*, is to observe Richard the true heir of our crown, meanly fomenting popular insurrections under Jack Cade, the demagogue of those days, in order to fright his cousin from a throne the gentle prince had no strong inclination to contend for: while the Lancastrian partizans, not urged by justice, but heated with desire of rejecting dictates from other nobles,

nobles, no way their superior, took the new-fashioned method of resting *their* king's title on the *people's choice*, when by a sort of national acceptance, his anti-predecessor came to the regal seat. 'Tis thus we see the barons on both sides engaged, as 'twere without their own consent, to pull down their own power, and substitute that of the commons. While the yet unregarded peasantry, who were supposed to be represented by that house of parliament, ranged themselves under their superior lords, and took the field as Yorkists or Lancastrians—the leaders of one party, Margaret and her son, with Clifford, Somerset, and many more; Richard of York upon the other side, supported by the earls of Salisbury and Warwick—a white rose being the badge of honour on their part, a red rose on the other, according to the spirit of the times. By letters which pass then in private families, we learn how high subordination was kept up: Suffolk, in some hot battle on the continent, was struggling in the fosse of a fortified town, and forced to yield to his antagonist. *Etes vous noble?* was the question—*si fait* the reply; but the Frenchman confessed himself no knight. Our duke then fainting with the loss of breath and blood, begged his antagonist to kneel a moment, whilst he dubbed him *chevalier* with his sword; then yielding himself his prisoner, was borne off the field. The style of married women of the highest rank, writing to their husbands was, most worshipful lord, and I humbly and reverently request your lordship, to give me order and full consent for a new gown, in which to greet queen Margaret on her progress, &c. But we must leave our little island to itself; on the first blood being drawn in that fierce contest, which was on the 22d. of May, 1455, at the battle of St. Alban's, where Henry was taken by the duke of York, and yielded up to him his whole authority; but his proud consort was not so content: she and her friends continued this division of the roses for thirty years from its beginning; and in the course of those years were fought, with various success, no fewer than twelve battles, in which, and in their consequences, were
lost

lost the lives of fourscore princes of the blood, with such a fall of British nobility, as nearly annihilated their existence in England, and effectually ruined their power. But whilst our British heroism thus partially, thus perversely wasted, unconsciously contributed to change the world's acknowledged authorities, and sap the feudal system long established; the growing elegance of the Florentine state, the accumulating riches of the Venetian dominante, and above all, the mean jealousy of the Genoese, promoted the same cause upon the continent; where that improvement, by which all others are recorded, that register of virtue and terror of vice; that best reward of every human excellence, *the art of printing*, now began to employ the mind of Faustus, a townsman of Mayence, who in partnership with Gutterberg, made some attempts, which for the first fifteen years hard study, ended at last in copper-plates. Schæffer their clerk however, inspired by his passion for Faustus's handsome daughter, after his masters had long toiled in vain, about the year 1448 obtained the girl's hand from her father, in cheap exchange for a discovery of moveable letters, and a new mode of inking them. Their method was at first to make fac similes from the MSS they were wishing to perpetuate, and some were sold for such, till copies being multiplied, Faustus was put in prison as a necromancer—he saved himself indeed, but with some difficulty, and our hack phrase “*The devil and Dr. Faustus*,” bears yet continued testimony to his danger. The Mazarin library at Paris, shewed in the year 1775, a Latin Bible of this kind, two volumes folio—a fac simile said to have been done in 1450: but Tully's Offices was the earliest book printed, as all agree. Thus Germany contributed to immortalize the praises of Italians, who under Cosmo de Medicis were trying to make young Florence rival ancient Rome; while nothing was wanting to his consummate, though temporary and unconfined dominion, except the title of king, to which he preferred that of *pater patriæ*, the father of his country.

But Spain and Portugal seemed now left single to go on quite in
the

the old way : Henry of Arragon having married Catharine of Castile by force, and disobliged his nobles who imprisoned him, many disputes arose, till John's succession calmed them for a time, and all united to obtain a victory over the Moors, who were terribly worsted at Figuera. Under Edward of Portugal indeed they regained their ground, and Alphonso's long reign kept them in check only, till the famous battle fought by Don Pedro with them in Andalusia, about 1450, seemed to threaten their total extirpation. The title of Sicily having been refused by Pope Martin the Vth. to Alphonso, the Spaniards thought of it no more. That pontiff who swayed the world by his virtue and wisdom thirteen years, and on whose tomb 'twas recorded, that he was the felicity of his times, had so set his face against the ancient and dangerous superstitions, that when a half-mad minorite ran about Rome, exposing for adoration the holy name of *Jesus*, and calling on his companions and upon passengers in the street for sudden and immediate prostrations, the sovereign ordered him to be taken care of, but said, "The adoration of our blessed Saviour was not to be thus transferred from himself to a painted board, which served only as a snare to weak understandings;" and he punished the minorites by taking every picture from their convent, lest, as he said, "they should be tempted to idolatry." His death was a hard blow upon the court of Rome, whose power had been shaken even by his election : the general councils gaining every day influence, seemed upon that late occasion to have asserted authority too, and evince the incroachments of that aristocracy upon the church, which had long been in possession of the state of Europe; and which at this moment was beginning to yield in its turn to democrattick principles, faintly discerned, and hitherto at no small distance. Amadeus of Savoy, under the assumed title of *Felix V.* contested the popedom with Condolirio, a low Venetian of Gondolier extraction, as his name imports. But *Felix* was unhappily worsted in the struggle, which soon terminated in favour of his antagonist, an active, though irresolute character; and

known to history by the ill-chosen appellation of Eugenius IV. for *eugenius* means high-born.

This pontiff, ever seeking to recover some lands lost to the church, and ever fixing on the minute most unfavourable for his purpose, notwithstanding his having bribed the Greek emperor to acknowledge papal supremacy, by exalting his two favourites, Isidore and Bessarion, to the dignity of cardinal, was at length deposed. A council having now clearly decreed, that they had power to depose popes who possessed in turn no power at all to reverse decrees of council; a new doctrine, and dangerous in its nature to the essence of monarchick government. Be this as it may, Eugenius by their many mortifications imposed on his impatient endurance, lost his life: and that awful moment which seldom fails to make a man sincere, however hypocritical it may find him; forced from this primate the singular confession, that had he never been exalted to supreme power in this world, he never should have felt reason to fear for his situation in the next. Soon after his demise, the beautiful library of the Vatican was erected by his learned successor, Nicholas V. who had the address to persuade the duke of Savoy into the truly wise measure of withdrawing his pretensions, and sending him into Germany as legate with an immense retinue—the prince tranquillized his haughty spirit into peace. A jubilee announced the end of these schismatical contentions, and five hundred and sixty people perished passing over Ponte St. Angelo, so immoderate was the heat, and so prodigious the throng. Holland about the same period, saw no fewer than 100,000 of her subjects swallowed up in the remarkable inundation of Dort, and 'tis observable, that at no distant moment, a new phenomenon appeared in Europe, viz. a wandering tribe of people speaking in an unknown language, who peacefully, but resolutely, overflowed many parts of Europe, occupying the waste lands, and practising chiromancy on such as would lend their palms, in which these travellers pretended to foresee future events. Pasquier says, “ They were originally 12,000 souls; Christians they called themselves,

“ selves, from the Lower Egypt, who had vowed a long pilgrimage ;
 “ and some shewed passports signed by Sigismund, a circumstance
 “ which afterwards induced the French to name them *Bohemians*. Other
 “ countries agree to call them, and those who imitate their mode of
 “ life, by the appellation of Gypsies ; but some who being connected
 “ with them, learned their tricks, showing slight of hand, and telling
 “ fortunes as they strolled along, were excommunicated by an active
 “ bishop of Paris.” Bohemia was however, become odious to all Ro-
 manists, since John Hufs and Jerome of Prague, had found and ren-
 dered it still more the focus of what one party naturally termed rebel-
 lions—the other reformation. Both were true.

The selling of indulgences, the preferment of boys to the highest dignities of the church—witness Gregory XI. who was made cardinal at fifteen years old, because he was brother's son to the sovereign ; with the refusal of the sacramental cup to the laity, for the sake of augmenting church influence, had revolted many : the cruel murder of two innocent men who only preached against these and other enormities, never pretending to justification by works—revolted more. Wickliffe had translated the New Testament, and from that hour none would be forcibly kept ignorant of their Saviour's general doctrine.

The Germans studied with peculiar pleasure every text that militated against ecclesiastical aggrandisement—reciprocal abuse between contending pontiffs too, served to detect many an artifice by which the world had long been kept in darkness. The blue mould of incipient putridity appeared at Rome, and Zisca was resolved *to cut it out*. Less a theologian than a warrior, this bold assertor of his and all his countrymen's pretensions, had taken the field with 40,000 men, some few months after the council of Constance, and had set mankind against the emperor and pope, for decreeing death to those who really sought reform only—not resistance. John of Bohemia said, “ That his com-
 “ mission was to revenge their death :” I cannot find the true name of his family, which was soon sunk in that *sousbriquet* by which he

claims our glance of *Retrospection*, and which conveys his most illustrious deeds to late posterity, perpetuating the remembrance of his eye-lost, and his victories won against the abhorred and faithless Sigismund, whose mean desertion of the subjects he had sworn to protect, roused warm resentment in his angry bosom, while negligent of Jesus's command at the last supper, to love all those who called themselves disciples of the same crucified master—he resolved rather to wreak vengeance upon the Catholics for past abuses, and made it his immediate pretence, that he would never more lay down those arms he had taken up, till in both kinds the eucharists should be administered in Bohemia.

These were no empty threats, John Zisca kept his word, built cities too in several parts of Germany where Protestant settlers yet maintain themselves; one of these towns he called Tabor, and when he died, his followers were known by name of Thaborites: he died not however, till after a decisive victory won by him upon the plains of Aufsig, where having performed feats of renown so as to amaze the enemy, he lost his sight at once by an arrow's point piercing that single eye which seemed almost to penetrate futurity.

Sigismund now proposed a conference; but on the road to where they meant to hold it, his great opponent worn with toils expired: leaving strict orders that his body should be flayed, and the skin made a drum of: assuring his friends, that the weak emperor's armies would fly on every side when they should hear Zisca, though dead, founding the fatal signal. I had the pleasure to be shewn an autograph written in a beautiful character upon ill-coloured paper, by this extraordinary person at Prague, in the year 1787. He signed his name, as 'tis transmitted down to us by the epithet *one-eyed*: Guercino the painter, who like himself immortalized a similar defect, signed his own family appellation *Barbieri*, in letters I have seen preserved of *his*. The Orphan Legions, so Protestants were called when their chief was no more, gained many great advantages in fight. The drum did in effect terrify the imperial troops, who tired of the contest, prevailed upon the emperor

peror and legate, after a long dispute, to pronounce at length these bold Bohemians true sons of the church, although they should receive the sacrament in both kinds, for which they obtained leave beside, and the pragmatick sanction confirming this decree, was published afterwards at Paris: while marble monuments at Prague itself, gave local perpetuity to this triumph over the Romish see: which could alone revenge itself in future, by calling all its Christian opponents *Picards*, a name of great to all, to *them* but undeserved reproach—Zisca had exterminated that whole sect as a disgrace to religion, and a shame to human reason, reserving only two to tell their opinions and vindicate their massacre. Sleidan says indeed, that his own followers were divided upon many dogma—but *Picards* were they not—all Europe frightened at *their* frantic behaviour, rejoiced to see them either cloathed or killed. But while sedition, schism, cruelty, combined with good sense, decency, and spirit of reformation to cut fresh channels in the western world, for the full stream of Christianity to flow in; by which, though it apparently refined its course, the tide lost much of weight and general force and power; we must confess that unity itself could not preserve the Greek church from being devoured in the east, where since the day that Morosini crowned earl Baldwin in Sta. Sophia's temple, A. D. 1205, the current even *visibly* lessened and failed, and gradually shrunk away under a series of emperors, some not unworthy of the place they fate in.

Theodore Lascaris, John of Jerusalem, with other names of note, brave though they were, could not withstand the crescent splendour of the Sultan's glory: which as we have seen blazed up to such a height in the year 1400, that no hero of inferior virtues and courage to Tamerlane, had it in their power by any means to keep them in check; and he *couched* only, not extirpated the rising cataract destined to put out the light of ancient Greece and Asia, Egypt and Palestine. His vigorous arm removed the fatal film an instant only: but under Isa, John VIIth, and VIIIth; Emanuel, and all the rest of the Andronici.

dronici and Palæologi, with mortal and destructive fury it returned, when Mahomet, son to Bajazet the Proud, spared not the brothers of his blood, but following a horrible and newly set example, murdered the youthful princes in the seraglio, who stood the nearest to their father's throne, and hewed a passage through his next of kin. His seat once well assured, however, the subject had no reason to complain. Victory in war, liberality in time of peace, marked the long reign of Mahomet the first, and rendered him so perfectly obeyed by ministers, that when he on his death-bed gave them a solemn charge to hide his illness till the favourite sultana's son should come to Adrianople, where his father sickened, those faithful servants, Ibrahim and Bajazet, sent for the destined heir immediately; and although Mahomet expired some days before his swiftest speed could reach the town, these bassas, with a Persick surgeon's help, deceived the anxious populace, by shewing them their darling sovereign's robes covering a well instructed mimic, who, thoroughly acquainted with his master's manners, personated to perfection the royal invalid; till Amurath arriving, rewarded a deceit by which *he* rose without opposition to fortune and to fame. A false Mustapha but stopt his progress for a moment: soon as great Mahomet's intentions were divulged, the trembling competitor offered his own head to the Sultan, and was spared. *His* genius was awake to larger views: it soon impelled him on to conquer Hungary, where Albert duke of Austria, who had married Sigismund's daughter, and succeeded to his dignity, seemed incapable of making much resistance.

Turkish power being quite uncontroll'd by any secondary or intermediate rank in the state, which, like the Babylonish empire of old, admits but of two characters, master and slave; seems at first glance a most enormous body, a monstrous weight of ruin to fall upon and crush a sinking continent. But to all poisons some latent antidote remains. This huge mass feels its diffused animation flowing from one springing mind alone; and if that soul lie long smothered in stupefaction

tion or dissolved in voluptuousness, the whole remains inert, innocuous, a compleat *caput mortuum*. That dispensation too, under which all the inhabitants of earth existed not uncomfortably during the infancy of this our world, was little likely to spread far a second time, when one whole quarter of it, broken by violence, had been again strongly cemented in small bits by commerce, gaining an artificial firmness beyond even its original strength. To such opponents Amurath displayed a temper of mind which made him very formidable. Inflamed with martial ardour, he press'd on; and sure of perfect and implicit obedience, was followed with alacrity by his incomparable captain the valiant Carambey. Those who withstood a torrent so tremendous, should not be shaded from our *Retrospect*. Huniades, well-named the Hungarian Hector, tempering valour with clemency, and animating the courage of his Christian legions by an example few could follow, was then Vayvod of Transylvania: his right arm raised by principle alone, fell not till it had gained from the Turks fifteen victories, chiefly by personal prowess, and an activity almost unequalled. It was he saved Belgrade long afterwards from the swift sword of Mahomet II. and signalized himself chiefly at the fatal, the memorable battle of Varna, where his endeavours to rescue the royal corpse (for Ladislaus fell early in the engagement) so attracted the notice of Amurath, that he erected a column on the spot, celebrating the courage of a *white knight* who bore no device upon his armour, but whose dauntless fervour in a sovereign's cause merited the praises even of an enemy.

It was however at Cunobiza where Mount Hæmus resounded with the clash of arms, that *Castriot*, by his defection from the infidels, who brought him up and called him Scanderbeg, meaning Lord Alexander, stopt for a time the progress of their hourly-extending empire. This young prince, an early prisoner from the Europeans, had been bred up a trusted favourite in the Sultan's court, where his personal graces and brilliant qualities had fixed the affections of brave Amurath during his father's

father's reign, and heaped upon his head since the accession of such a friend to the throne, every pleasure that boundless power can bestow. His birth, his baptism, and precepts heard in infancy however, although smothered under loads of kindnesses, were never forgotten, or obliterated from a mind glowing with concealed desire to revenge his father's death, his own vile degradation, and the slavery of his country, which in him ought to have respected the blood of *Pyrrhus* and obeyed their sovereign. To accomplish these purposes, he maintained a private correspondence with Huniades and warlike Julian, our Christian commanders; told them the unsuspecting Sultan's aims, putting it often in their power to thwart them; and in the decisive day at Cunobiza, watched for the moment of defeat and left the field, hurrying with him the *reis effendi*, an old secretary who kept the signet of the Grand Signor, and who, confiding in their constant intimacy, little suspected the motive of such kindness, and clung close to the side of his imagined protector. Soon as they were out of sight however, Scanderbeg roughly seized his companion, forced him to sign forged letters from the king, demanding of the governor of Croya that he should give the garrison up to *him*, on pain of instant and imminent displeasure. This performed, he plunged his knife into the faithful secretary's heart, whose last crime towards his prince had been his first; and having hid the body, marched on swiftly to Croya with his counterfeited orders; where the governor, concluding himself superseded by Lord Alexander, quitted the city, and our artful *Castriot* taking possession, let in the Christian troops, who sacked the place, and left not there an infidel alive. Shall we lament that sad necessity which forced our hero on such treacherous conduct? and at commencement of his course obliged him

To wade thro' ways obscene, his honour bend,
And shock e'en nature to obtain his end;

or shall we turn the indignant eyes of *Retrospect* away, and fix them rather upon generous Amurath, who after the great victory at Varna,
when

when his mean courtiers asked him why he was so sad, the brave Turk, stroking his white beard, replied, "Because whoever triumphs here, "I find; 'tis death alone that conquers. How many gallant warriors, "Christians and Mussulmen, lie this day mute beneath his cruel "scythe!" The letter too from this wise sultan to his old acquaintance breathes warm a manly tenderness that glistens through all the odd invective it abounds in, and begins, "Amurath Ottoman, Emperor of the East; to the most hollow and ungrateful Scanderbeg, sends "neither health nor welfare—though once love." To which the wording of the answer is no less observable; but we can only note the superscription: "The soldier of Christ Jesus, George Castriot, Prince "of Epirus and Albania, to Amurath Ottoman, King of the Turks, "sends greeting." Of such a controversy the termination is less unpleasing than the continuance: all charge of black ingratitude however ends with the life of the Grand Signior, who was particularly his friend, companion and protector. After his death, our honest admiration willingly follows the valorous champion of truth, the strenuous opponent of Mahomet the second, so truly termed the Great. We hear no talk of Scanderbeg indeed when that victorious monarch, his royal father's obsequies performed, set steadily to obey his last injunctions, and drive Christianity from Constantinople, which Palæologus endeavoured to defend; and such were the advantages of situation, that less than a despotick power, that power by willing multitudes obeyed, could never have reduced it to submission: for though the haven was obtained through treachery, it was industrious fortitude that took the due advantage of the foe's perfidiousness, and drew a line of gallies over land; a plan suggested by the fraudulent Genoese, who lived in constant fear lest the Venetians should gain or should enjoy that confidence from Constantine which he was not likely long to have in his disposal. They strove to burn this battery by night; but that the Ottoman vigilance prevented; and the next morning forty noble youths, natives of Venice, were, as a punishment for such attempt,

VOL. I. 3 M

tempt, massacred in the Turkish camp, where they were prisoners, by Mahomet's command. The Greek emperor retaliated this cruelty, by sticking on the points of pikes the heads of two hundred Mussulmen, captives within the town, and set them on the walls for him to see: he saw and laughed, and looked with confidence upon two hundred and fifty thousand Turks bound to revenge their countrymen. And now, after a siege of *forty* days, a memorable number to both sides in those times,* the town was taken by a fierce assault, for which prodigious preparations had been made.

Our previous measures bore another form. The Christian Emperor entered the dome of Santa Sophia's temple by torch light: through the vast edifice a solemn silence, a universal gloom struck to the heart: from the high altar only beamed those rays meant to illuminate the sad repository of our Lord's body, whose last supper was now, for the last time, celebrated there by his disciples. When the imperial lips had been thus comforted, thus strengthened, he addressed his followers, who recollecting they were spoken to by *Constantine* the son of *Helena*, burst into tears and audible laments; and prostrating themselves, swore all to perish in defence of the great name that founded their now-falling city, the second Rome, the aggregate of excellence, the envy of the eastern world. Justiniani only seemed obdurate: his private wrongs, fancied or real, rankled in his heart even at that awful moment; and history attributes the failure of the day to his desertion on the first wound received. A most unyielding spirit possessed the other allies, and caused the infidels incredible annoyance; while our brave Europeans sold their lives at a high price, and every fosse was filled with murdered Mussulmen, whose bold companions made of *their*

* For *forty* days deluge was acknowledged by Turks and Christians;
forty days of fast had been observed by Moses, Elias, and Jesus Christ;
forty days of penitence were allowed the Ninevites, not then forgotten; and
forty years war is, I believe, even yet expected by orientals before the end
 of the world.

bodies a step to raise them on, and scale the walls; in vain. No Christian arrow, no stone missed its mark: flung by our gallant knights, the invaders fell, heaped on their bleeding brethren; till great Mahomet, like Homer's heroes, resistless in war, drove to the breach, and with his iron mace burst every barrier between him and victory. 'Twas then from a high tower his dreadful voice proclaimed a three days pillage of the place to troops who should bear him in conqueror, and seat him on the throne of Palæologus. Constantine heard; and doubting not his destiny, tore the once sacred purple from his shoulders, the white plume from his head, and plunging unknown amidst a host of foes, soon found the honourable death he fought for.

Such deeds denote and render most remarkable the 29th of May 1453, when the great city, founded just 1120 years before, yielded herself up to victorious Turcism; and the fine church raised with incredible expences by Justinian was doomed to suffer horrible profanation, a turban being placed upon the crucifix, which they shot at with arrows, carrying it round in impious procession: while the great temple's self was made a stable of, only reserving the richly-adorned chancel for a mosque, according to their own superstition.

In the general confusion, while plunder, cruelty and murder stalked around the desolated habitations of the rich, the publick libraries by chance caught fire, and no fewer than one hundred and twenty thousand volumes were destroyed. Mahomet, although no literary character, expressed his concern; he grieved at the excesses consequent upon his oath to yield such elegancies into brutal hands, and often expressed his wish that the three days were over. Observing in the interim a slave or busy Mussulman, breaking for sport the inlaid pavement of some church or palace, he struck him on the face with his flat scymitar, and bid him go seek some sensual pleasure for himself, and not spoil things which could alone delight that intellect *he* ought not to pretend to. “It makes a man's heart sigh (said he) to see the spider
“weave her web in palaces, and hear the owls hoot from the soldier's
“watch-

“ watch-tower.” This is the common feeling of humanity, expressed by oriental language. Mahomet had not studied the philosophy of *our* days; he had not hardened his mind by atheism to insensibility.

Constantine’s corpse was his first object of enquiry: it was discovered by the Roman eagles embroidered on his shoes. The victor saw it buried decently, and turned his thoughts to enjoyment of the conquests he had made. In company of one distinguished female all that enjoyment for two years concentrated; and his hard-earned reward of toil and danger, was only found in a Greek slave, Irene; whose powers of pleasing, and consummate beauty; whose noble birth and elegance of manners, proved his discernment and superior taste: whilst warm returns of the most tender passion upon the part of a Pheacian fair one, shewed all mankind how Mahomet, in peace, could lay aside the terrors of his name, and charm those hearts which were born hostile to him. But the stern Janissaries, grieving to see their spirit of a universal conquest checked by the transports of voluptuous love, began to growl: a Christian captive now ruled over the Ottomans, they said, and sighed indignant; and not unlike to the prætorian bands some centuries before, murmured at distance from the throne their sullen but dangerous discontents. A trusty Bassa well-informed of this, and heedless of his own life when put in competition with his master’s, now threw himself *uncalled* at the proud Sultan’s feet, who listening to his tale with varying expression, told him he should not die, but call the troops to-morrow to a general and plenary review. Instant obedience followed this command, and Mahomet pass’d the remaining hours with more than usual gaiety and splendour in the apartments of his sweet Irene; where favourites alone partook a feast, made fascinating by talents and lasting by luxury. Their revels ended not till morning called; and the enamoured emperor besought his fair companion to hasten then, and adjust all her ornaments; for that she was to shine brightest at the review, and every eye bear witness to her charms. The hour arriving, to a temporary seat high-raised above the crowd

crowd Irene came, led by her royal lover, and sparkling in all the jewels of Golconda. When silent wonder held the assembly mute, mixed as it was of warriors and of citizens, the monarch thus addressed them: “ Servants and soldiers! from this hour confess you are not slaves to “ an unworthy sovereign: behold this model of perfection here, and “ learn, that he who can thus master his own passions, deserves to rule “ the world, and with your help will conquer it.” So saying, with his left hand he seized Irene by the flowing hair, and with one sudden stroke of his true scymitar cut off her head, and tossed it to the terrified spectators.

On this strange act of savage magnanimity must *Retrospection* pause a while; reflecting, that as it confirmed the Sultan in his dear-bought power, so it extinguished every distant hope of Christianity’s revival in the east.

END OF VOL. I.







Piozzi, Hester Lynch,

Retrospection, or, A review of the most striking and important events,
characters, situations, and their consequences, which the last eighteen
hundred years have presented to the view of mankind

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